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April 16, 2002 Tuesday

SECTION: INTERNATIONAL NEWS

LENGTH: 849 words

HEADLINE: Powell sets up new talks with Sharon, Arafat

BYLINE: BARRY SCHWEID, AP Diplomatic Writer

DATELINE: JERUSALEM

BODY:

Still pressing for a cease-fire and weighing a peace conference, Secretary of State Colin Powell is holding at least one more round of talks with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Powell may be nearing the end of his peace mission and would like to nail down at least one solid gain. But Sharon has vowed to keep Israeli troops in Ramallah indefinitely and Arafat is hedging on his commitment to curb violence until Israel pulls out.

Powell was due to see Sharon on Tuesday and then go to Ramallah on Wednesday for a meeting with Arafat in his battered compound. Those two meetings could hold the key to his difficult peacemaking mission.

"We will maintain close contact with both sides in the coming days," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Monday.

But that may be through senior U.S. officials, not Powell, who could be going home late Wednesday or early Thursday.

Before seeing Sharon, Powell held separate meetings with Palestinian professional and business people and with Yossi Beilin and Yossi Sarid, dovish members of the Israeli parliament.

Palestinian officials said they are working on a joint statement with the United States that would include a stiff condemnation of suicide bomb attacks and a call for Israel to pull out of Palestinian-controlled areas.

The two sides began putting the document together during talks on Monday. A copy of the first draft, obtained by The Associated Press, shows that Palestinians want to include a call for international observers and further U.N. Security Council action.

President Bush, who hasn't spoken with Arafat, called Sharon on Monday.

In their 15-minute conversation, Sharon told Bush Israeli troops would pull out of Jenin and Nablus within a week, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said. Sharon, in a CNN interview, said Israeli forces would remain indefinitely in Ramallah, where they surround Arafat's headquarters, and in Bethlehem until terrorists surrender.

Bush told Sharon that ending the siege at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem was one of Powell's most urgent priorities, Fleischer said.

"The Church of Nativity problem has got to get resolved. That's one of the things that Secretary Powell is working very hard on right now," said Fleischer, who was traveling with Bush in Iowa.

Powell is considering an international or regional conference aimed at stopping Middle East violence and restarting Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

"It's a way to get the parties together and talking," Powell said on the ninth day of a peace mission that has made little apparent progress.

Sharon suggested a conference to Powell at their meeting in Tel Aviv on Sunday, though Sharon objected to including Arafat.

Powell said the United States would not necessarily be host for such a conference and that Arafat could send high-level Palestinian officials to represent him if talks were held at the foreign minister level.

"We've got to move quickly to a political track and there are many ways to do that and one way is with a regional or international conference," Powell said.

Sharon "gave some endorsement to that kind of idea" when they talked on Sunday "and Chairman Arafat did as well," Powell said.

But Hassan Abdel Rahman, the top Palestinian official in the United States, said Sharon should first stop his incursion into the West Bank. "Nothing can happen before that," he said in an interview from Washington.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, on CNN's "Larry King Live," said Arafat is the elected leader of the Palestinian people.

"Nobody can fire him and we cannot replace him. But what we can demand is that he will change his policies and behavior. This is a must," Peres said.

Powell said he did not broach the idea of who would attend a conference except that representatives of both sides would be there. He said of Arafat, "It doesn't necessarily require his presence to get started."

Fleischer said the administration was looking at a number of "constructive ideas to help the parties enter into the political process and to create a cease-fire."

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi endorsed a conference, saying such a gathering must include the United States, the European Union and the Arab League as well as Israel and the Palestinians.

French President Jacques Chirac expressed cautious optimism, saying a conference could be a "new road leading us in the right direction." But Prime Minister Lionel Jospin said the conference wouldn't make any sense if it excluded Arafat.

A British government official said Monday that Arafat would have to be included in Mideast peace talks if there were to be any hope of solving the present crisis.

Foreign Office Minister Ben Bradshaw, was asked by Channel 4 TV news if he thought leaving Arafat out of discussions was a realistic proposition.

"No, we don't," he replied. "We're quite clear that Yasser Arafat is the democratically elected leader of the Palestinian people and any idea of a conference that is going to have a hope of solving this terrible crisis that excluded him is ludicrous."

GRAPHIC: AP Photo XHM105

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SHOW: Q&A WITH JIM CLANCY 12:30 PM Eastern Standard Time

April 16, 2002 Tuesday

Transcript # 041602cb.k18

SECTION: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL

LENGTH: 3884 words

HEADLINE: Q&A

GUESTS: Phillip Winslow, Aharon Ze'evi, Hassan Abdel Rahman, Gal Luft

BYLINE: Zain Verjee, Rula Amin

HIGHLIGHT:

The Jenin refugee camp: what really happened?

BODY:

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(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SAEB ERAKAT, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: There were crimes committed in this refugee camp. This was a flagrant violation of international law, and I stand by the term massacre.

ARIEL SHARON, ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER: It was very heavy battles. We suffered very heavy casualties there. But still, we were very careful not to harm civilians. This story is a lie. It's a lie.

ZAIN VERJEE, CNN ANCHOR (voice-over): Conflicting accounts about the Israeli military operation in the Jenin refugee camp.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE (through translator): They put the men with their arms up against the wall, and then they sprayed them with bullets, from top to bottom.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE SOLDIER: I saw no massacre. No bodies rolling on the floors.

VERJEE: It's impossible to verify the tales being told about Jenin. Some journalists and aide workers have made it inside.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Mainly, we look for injured, and so far we haven't found a lot of injured.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE REPORTER: What have you found?

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UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well, you can see, looking around. There have been a number of dead that we've taken out.

VERJEE: On Q&A, the Jenin refugee camp, what really happened?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(on camera): I'm Zain Verjee. Welcome to Q&A.

War is always dirty and bloody. In Jenin refugee camp, people were killed.

Israelis and Palestinians have widely different versions of the reality in Jenin, and we know that each side has an interest in spinning its view to the news media.

It's been quite hard to piece together exactly what happened in Jenin, but we're going to try.

Rula Amin made it into the refugee camp just a few hours ago, and she joins us now on the phone.

Rula, what did you see?

RULA AMIN, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, Zain, we have trying to get in for almost seven days. Today we finally got in by bypassing Israeli tanks and APC's.

What we can tell you, and we can confirm, is that there is a lot of destruction in that camp.

In the beginning, when we entered the camp, the houses were intact, we didn't see much damage. But then when we ventured really inside the camp, we hit some neighborhoods where the whole neighborhood was devastated.

Some of the houses were completely knocked down, bulldozed to rubble. Other houses were very, very badly damaged, knocked down, totally unusable. Other houses, you can tell that they were knocked down, maybe by a passing tank or something else, because the whole front of the house had fallen down, and yet you would see the bedroom still there, the mirrors hanging, the clocks hanging.

Not one house in this neighborhood that we were in had been intact. All of the houses had been knocked down, hit by a missile or been bulldozed.

So we saw a lot of destruction. According to the United Nations, 3,000 residents of Jenin refugee camp are homeless now, and when we were there we saw some of these residents coming back to the camp to check out the damage, check out their houses, and some of them had lost touch with members of their own families. They were looking for their sons, parents, siblings, just trying to find out what was their fate -- Zain.

VERJEE: Rula, have you seen any evidence of what the Palestinians are calling a massacre?

AMIN: Well, Zain, it's very hard for us to confirm that, because the camp had been sealed off for almost a week.

What I can tell you is I went into one house, and a lady had driven us to that house, and she told us, I want you to see what's inside my house.

I went inside the room. The smell was horrible. It was a very strong smell. And then I saw five bodies lying on the ground, some of them covered with blankets. Obviously, these bodies had been there, dead, for a few days. They were decomposed, and it was a very strong smell with flies flying there.

And this is in one room, five bodies, that we have been able to see.

I spoke to the head of Jenin hospital, right next to the camp. He told us that they buried 15 bodies this morning.

Now, that amounts to 20 bodies. The residents in the camp were trying to point to different houses, different rubble, saying that there are people already buried under the rubble. Families, they are saying, many of them civilians, not only Palestinian fighters.

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The Israeli army says it was a fierce battle and that, yes, the casualty numbers are high. They're talking about dozens, not hundreds, and they're saying most of them are fighters.

Now, the eyewitnesses we have been talking to, residents of that camp, Palestinians, are telling us about some of the executions. They say many of those were shot dead after the surrendered.

Also, one major factor that everyone had been pointing to is the fact that ambulances have not been allowed in.

Now, Israeli wouldn't allow the ambulances or medical teams in, and that meant that many of the wounded bled to death in that camp -- Zain.

VERJEE: Rula Amin, speaking to us from Jenin, one of the few journalists there. Thank you, Rula.

Joining us now on the phone as well is Philip Winslow. He's with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. He's also just been to the Jenin refugee camp.

Phillip, what did you see?

PHILLIP WINSLOW, UNRWA: Well, the destruction in the refugee camp is absolutely staggering. It is widespread, as your reporter was describing, right across most of the parts of the refugee camps that we saw.

Heavy signs of battle damage from tank rounds, helicopter missiles, and the Israeli bulldozers that flattened a lot of the houses.

VERJEE: From what you've seen, how many dead, how many injured?

WINSLOW: There is absolutely no way of putting an accurate figure on that at this point. Some parts of the camp are still closed to everyone, including the United Nations. Nobody really knows yet for sure how many dead.

There has been talk of a massacre, and I would not use that word because I have no evidence to support it, but most certainly numbers of people have been killed, and certainly many more wounded.

VERJEE: Can you describe the humanitarian situation in Jenin refugee camp to us and tell us what kind of emergency efforts are being made by aid agencies to get the help there fast?

WINSLOW: This should be regarded as a major humanitarian disaster. It has been described as looking like an earthquake.

The population of the camp, approximately 20,000 people. There is now no water in the camp, no running water certainly, no electricity. It is very hot here.

The fighting and the siege began approximately two weeks ago, so you have some thousands of people who have been trapped in this place for that length of time. People are absolutely desperate for food and water and medical supplies, particularly water at this time.

It is going to require a massive international effort on the part of the United Nations, numerous NGO's and relief agencies, to even begin to restore any semblance of normalcy to this shattered place.

VERJEE: Phillip, very briefly, is the Israeli Defense Forces letting you conduct your operations effective? Are they interfering?

WINSLOW: Well, they are not letting us conduct operations effectively, no. I would have to emphasize that the Israeli Defense Forces still fully control and occupy this United Nations administered refugee camp, and we have only had limited success -- we've only so far, in two days now, been able to get two trucks of food, approximately 20 tons of food, into the camp -- just a drop in the bucket.

So our efforts have been frustrated, delayed, refused on any number of grounds for the past two weeks now, and even in these last few days.

VERJEE: Phillip Winslow with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. Sir, thank you for speaking to us.

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Now, I spoke to the head of military intelligence for the Israeli Defense Forces, Maj. Gen. Aharon Ze'evi. I started by asking him how many Palestinians were killed in Jenin.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MAJ. GEN. AHARON ZE'EVI, IDF: We know about dozens. I have to say that it is very difficult to know exactly the numbers, because a lot of places are trapped. We have even found booby-trapped bodies, and it is very dangerous to enter.

Today a team of journalists, also from CNN, visited the place, and also Sunday. So everything will be clear after we can show you everything that happened here.

VERJEE: It's not just about numbers here, though, sir. There are questions as to how the Palestinians were killed, why they were killed. Reports coming out of people being buried alive, of summary executions. How do you respond to that?

ZE'EVI: I have to say clear and cut, we are working and we are fighting with our highest moral values in the world. No one will be killed without a rifle and without fighting.

We asked the people of Jenin to leave the place, and hundreds of them left the place before IDF entered into Jenin City.

After that, we fought and it was a very terrible fight. We lost 26 soldiers during this fight. Unfortunately, the other side lost also life. But it was a real fight for us, for our children, and against terror.

VERJEE: You say it was a real fight, but you are basically describing a handful of armed men with guns, and as you said earlier, booby-trapped buildings. But you have tanks. You have many tanks that had rolled in to Jenin. You're a military man. Didn't you expect there would be some resistance, but your equipment and the tanks that you have are so much more?

ZE'EVI: I have to say this is an unfair fight. I am sure that we prefer not to fight this fight. We didn't begin this fight. I have to say that stopping terror immediately, no one in Jenin, in Nablus, in Jericho, will see our tanks. We will not be there. We don't want to be there.

VERJEE: But did you have to destroy so much?

ZE'EVI: We don't have to destroy. We want to save lives. And this way we are sure that our soldiers will be safe and we will not kill innocent people on the other side, because then the soldiers are more accurate and to fight and to kill only those people that are keeping rifles in their hand.

VERJEE: But sir, as you say, a number of journalists, including CNN, have been allowed into Jenin, and the pictures that are coming out show scenes of destruction. Buildings have been flattened and destroyed. So my question is, fine, we can appreciate that you say that you're fighting a terrorist infrastructure, but did you have to destroy so much?

ZE'EVI: I have to say, it is really terrible. I don't like to see these pictures. But to rebuild buildings is very easy. To bring back life is impossible. And what they are doing in our cities is they are killing innocent people every day. These children will not be back. It is impossible to bring them back to their families. It is possible, by humanitarian efforts, to build again Jenin and Nablus, in a peaceful environment.

VERJEE: Sir, in a situation like this, how do you know a good guy from a bad guy? I mean, it's a difficult situation and can you concede that the IDF could have made mistakes?

ZE'EVI: I have to say we can make mistakes, unfortunately. But on purpose, we don't want to fight against innocent people. We fight only with those that are fighting against us. But a suicide bomber that is coming to Netanya or to Tel Aviv, he tries to find only innocent people. He doesn't fight against the army. He doesn't fight against the IDF.

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So unfortunately, when we are fighting in Jenin, we are asking the people in Jenin to leave, and a lot of people from the intelligence organizations, we let them go back to their families, and they came to us and they didn't fight.

VERJEE: OK. General, one last question for you, sir. There are reports, specifically from one Israeli human rights group, that suggests that all the Palestinians that have been arrested and detained are in camps and are being humiliated, beaten, starved. Is that what is happening?

ZE'EV: I know exactly how we deal in our camps with prisoners and with terrorists, and I have to say we are working upon the international law. It is impossible to say without any knowledge that what happens in these camps is against the rules and against the law.

VERJEE: Gen. Aharon Ze'evi, head of military intelligence for the IDF. Sir, thank you so much for being on Q&A.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

(on camera): Coming up, we'll have the Palestinian version of what happened in Jenin, and we're also going to hear from a former Israeli military commander in Jenin.

Stay with Q&A.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

VERJEE: Welcome back.

What happened in Jenin refugee camp? The Palestinians say there was a massacre. Israel says there wasn't.

Joining us in Washington is Lt. Col. Gal Luft, a reserve officer in the Israeli Defense Forces and once a commander in Jenin.

Also in Washington, Hassan Abdel Rahman, the chief Palestinian representative to the United States.

Thanks to you both for being with us.

Mr. Rahman, the Palestinians say there's been a massacre. We're hearing numbers of 400, 500 dead. How are you coming up with this number?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REP. TO THE U.S.: It's very obvious that Gen. Ze'evi was lying, for the following reasons.

First, the methods that were used by the Israeli army suggests that there was indiscriminate killing, and that's what is a massacre in my views.

Second, Israel used not only tanks and bulldozers to bulldoze homes over its inhabitants, but they used also Apache helicopters and they used guided missiles, as it was reported today in "The New York Times," to kill people and destroy people.

Third, there is a pattern that suggests that what Israel has conducted really amounts to war crimes. It is very, very difficult to count the numbers of dead, because many of them are buried under the rubble. But we judge.

VERJEE: Isn't that the problem itself? Because you're making these allegations, but you have no proof. There are no bodies. You haven't gone in and documented who is there. You haven't done any of that, and this is a serious accusation.

RAHMAN: Would you -- yes, if you allow me. First of all, what constitutes a massacre? How many people have to be killed in order to say that there was a massacre?

Second, the behavior of the Israelis during 15 days, not allowing people to assist the wounded. Therefore, as Rula Amin said, there were many people who bled to death. Even today, still most of the camp is closed off.

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We can figure the numbers, or calculate the numbers, on the basis of reports from their families, who claim that their relatives are missing. You have up to now 1,600 people who have reported their relatives missing. They may be killed, they may be buried under the rubble, or maybe somewhere else, but you can never.

VERJEE: I would like to bring in Gal Luft here, sir. I need to have him respond to what you're saying.

Gal, is this true? You've been in the IDF. Is this how they operate, or is this an exaggeration?

LT. COL. GAL LUFT, IDF RESERVES: You know, Zain, we can sit here until the end of days and argue about the numbers, but there is a very easy way to establish the truth. And we need to establish the truth and we need to do it now.

I know that every human being, man, woman, child, has a name. We need to establish a name list and to create one history about what happened in Jenin. If we don't do it today, five years down the road, ten years down the road, the numbers will be inflated until people will talk about hundreds of thousands of people, the same way they talk about Sabra and Shatila.

Horrible disasters happen in a lot of places in the world, including in New York and here in Washington.

VERJEE: So you're saying you have to go in and document the numbers, otherwise it'll be.

LUFT: Absolutely.

VERJEE: OK. Let me ask you this. How strictly are the codes of conduct adhered to and enforced by the IDF? I mean, when they're under fire, do the rules bend? How strictly are they enforced?

LUFT: I don't care if it's the IDF, the American military or if it's peacekeeping from Norway -- every military that is exposed to fighting, to an environment like this, where you have thousands of people crowded in the very, very narrow roads, coming in with tanks and armored vehicles, bad things happen.

We need to understand that. Urban warfare is the most horrible warfare that is possible.

The American military, in October 1993, in a terrain very similar to what we see in Jenin, in a place called Mogadishu, killed in one day 1,000 Somalis. Nobody spoke about massacre. This is the nature of urban warfare, and if people don't understand what urban warfare is, go see "Black Hawk Down."

VERJEE: OK. OK. Let's talk a little about urban warfare here -- and I'd like to raise a point with Hassan Abdel Rahman. Palestinian militants are operating in a civilian area. There are accusations that, look, it's their own fault for putting civilians at risk. They're using people as human shields, and that this is a deliberate strategy by these Palestinian militants to operate. Your response?

RAHMAN: Zain, I think we are missing the point here, by approaching the whole issue in the way that it is being approached.

Here you have a town, a city, where tens of thousands of civilians are living, and those people are living under the illegal military occupation of Israel. They did not wage a war against Israel, and the West Bank is not.

VERJEE: There are suicide bombings in Israel, and innocent civilians are dying.

RAHMAN: Can you.

VERJEE: No. I have to call you on what you're saying. You have to represent both sides.

RAHMAN: You have one individual or ten individuals. You do not conduct collective punishment on a whole nation for a crime committed by one or two individuals, or ten, or 100.

You are here conducting war crimes against a civilian population.

In the United States, if you have five people who are involved in an incident against anybody, do you destroy the whole town? Isn't this -- we are not talking about the runaway problems of Israel.

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VERJEE: I appreciate that, but what we're talking about is the fact that there is firing coming from Palestinian militants.

RAHMAN: There was not firing coming.

VERJEE: There are allegations. There are reports that have been documented by human -- no. Let me make my point.

RAHMAN: Yes.

VERJEE: My point is, is that the Palestinian Authority is not stopping firing that is believed to have come from civilian areas. That is a violation of international law.

RAHMAN: Firing against who?

VERJEE: If you don't go in and stop people firing from civilian areas, that's a violation the Palestinian Authority is committing.

RAHMAN: Zain, I think you are, again, missing the point.

Here, there was no firing on the Israelis from those refugee camps and from those cities.

There were allegations that people came from those refugee camps and went to Israel. There was no firing from those refugee camps at Israel.

VERJEE: Gal, what do you make of that point?

RAHMAN: So if you have.

VERJEE: Gal -- let Gal respond to that. What do you make of that point: no firing at all from civilian areas into Israeli forces?

LUFT: This is a scene of combat. This is where combat took place.

RAHMAN: Imposed by Israel.

LUFT: Let's deal with the issue of the occupation later. We're talking about Jenin now. This is the topic of the program: Jenin. We need to establish history, because if we don't establish what happened there now, we will never be able to do it again.

And right now, the bodies are still lying there. We have to go in -- a concerted effort by Palestinians, Israelis and the international organizations, to come up with a story that is credible and put it for the rest of the world to judge.

VERJEE: Gal, how does the IDF decide who is part of the terrorist infrastructure? That's a really loose term and anything can go under that. How do you decide and how do you decide who's a good guy and who's a bad guy?

LUFT: It's very difficult.

First of all, when you use the term civilians -- I mean, all the members of al Qaeda were in civilian clothes and they are according to some people's definition, civilians. This is very, very difficult terrain that we are in.

People are conducting.

RAHMAN: So you kill them all.

LUFT: No, you don't kill all. But you kill people who hold guns and exchange fire and, I must say, in these kinds of things, you also have innocent civilians dying. Yes.

VERJEE: OK. You kill people who hold guns. But what about, as you told me, Gal, an old Palestinian woman may be sewing an explosives belt together. Or an old blind Palestinian man saying, you know what, conduct martyrdom operations. Or a 15-year-old girl mixing chlorides and chemicals. Do they constitute the terrorist infrastructure?

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LUFT: Well, in a way they are constituting the terrorist infrastructure, because they are facilitating.

VERJEE: But how do you know? How can you go in and make those definitions that this is who they are, because it's hard to do that?

LUFT: You don't. You don't. The purpose was to go in, confiscate weapons, arrest people, and call the population not to resist.

Once people began to resist, there was a need to use military force and, in some places even harsh military measures. But the people got the option to leave their homes and to enable to IDF to operate freely. They did not. And therefore we had.

VERJEE: OK. Hassan Abdel Rahman, you get the final word. You have 30 seconds.

RAHMAN: This is not a police operation by the Israeli army. It's a war against the Palestinian population all over the West Bank. There is a pattern of destruction that has been conducted by the Israeli army against the infrastructure, against the institutions. There was looting by the Israeli army.

There was -- the criminality of the Israelis by not allow assistance to those wounded for 14 days. Some of them had to bleed to death. This is a war crime under international law, and I hope that one day we can try Shaul Mofaz and Sharon for those war crimes that they committed against Palestinian civilians.

VERJEE: That's still debatable, the issue of war crimes, but we're going to have to.

RAHMAN: Well, you are debating it.

VERJEE: No. We're going to leave it there, because we have to have evidence to prove the allegations that you're making, and we don't have a body count yet.

(CROSSTALK)

VERJEE: We're going to have to leave it there. We are going to have to leave it there.

Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief Palestinian representative to the United States. Lt. Col. Gal Luft, former reserve officer of the Israeli Defense Forces, once a commander in Jenin -- a reserve officer, excuse me. Sorry.

Thank you both for being on Q&A. Appreciate that.

For now, though, the news continues, here on CNN.

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LOAD-DATE: September 15, 2003

SHOW: Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC

April 16, 2002 Tuesday

LENGTH: 1773 words

HEADLINE: Israeli embassy spokesman Mark Regez and PLO representative to the US **Hasan Abdel Rahman** discuss Israeli actions in Jenin refugee camp

BODY:

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host (Los Angeles):

THE BIG STORY tonight: What really happened inside the Jenin refugee camp on the West Bank? Some of the heaviest fighting between Palestinians and the Israeli army took place in the camp, and some Palestinian groups have accused the Israelis of killing large numbers of civilians. Today what remains of the camp was opened to reporters, and so far there's no evidence to support the claims of mass killings. But it could be weeks before the rubble will be cleared and an accurate death toll to be determined. Joining me now is Mark Regev. He's spokesman for the Israeli embassy in Washington and **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the chief PLO representative to the United States. Let me go to Mr. Regev.

What is the official position of the Israeli government? Have you offered up all the information, all the bodies that are necessary to get this information to the public?

Mr. MARK REGEV (Israeli Embassy Spokesman): Well, we're doing what we can. Obviously, the refugee camp in Jenin is--is a war zone and there's a lot of rubble and--and buildings that have been destroyed. There was very, very--serious house-to-house fighting. We lost a lot of boys both killed and injured, a lot of Palestinian casualties there. There are combat people, there are terrorists there, militia people. We are now opening it up to the press. And as you say, all these reports about massacre was just propaganda. It's not true.

MATTHEWS: But was it a mistake--was it a mistake of your government to keep that information, to keep the Red Cross out, to keep reporters out during the course of the--when--when they could have counted the bodies that left open the prospect of--of underhandedness, didn't it?

Mr. REGEV: Well, first of all, I would suggest that you always take the words of Palestinian propaganda people with a grain of salt. That's a rule. But I think we had no choice. There was combat going on. It was a war zone. The US Army closes combat zones to the press. The British army does the same. NATO forces do the same. When you've got shooting going on, when people are getting killed...

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MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. REGEV: ...when combat is actually taking place, I think all responsible societies close it to civilian traffic including the press.

MATTHEWS: Mark, you think there was no attempt by the Israelis to prevent Al Jazeera and the--and the Arab TV cameras to get in there and show all those bodies so that they could use it against Israel? There wasn't some aspect of Israeli decision making which reflected a desire to keep the cameras from the Arab world from doing their job?

Mr. REGEV: Can I say, on April 8th we actually went with the Red Cross and we wanted to--to help move out the wounded and the--and the injured and the people who were killed, and the Palestinians didn't cooperate because they wanted to have pictures there of bodies lying up in stacks so they could continue with

their propaganda. There were people killed. There were people killed in combat. There were people killed in operations. There was no massacre full stop. It's a Palestinian myth. It's part of their propaganda campaign. It--you could say it's in their interest to say as many people are killed as possible because that's--that's part of their propaganda.

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. REGEV: But the facts are the opposite.

MATTHEWS: Let me to go ma--**Hasan Abdel Rahman**. Mr. Rahman, do you have any independent evidence that suggests a massacre?

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (Palestine Liberation Organization Representative to the United States): Well, first of all, what's a massacre?

MATTHEWS: Oh, a couple hundred people or civilians or 10 or 20 civilians.

Mr. RAHMAN: Israel called the attack on Netanya, where 28 people were killed, a massacre. It is not really the number that counts, it is the methods. It is evident and obvious to everyone that Israel committed war crimes under international law in the refugee camp for the following reasons: One, using tanks to demolish homes over its civilian inhabitants. Second, using helicopters to fire missiles on a civilian dwelling. Third, not allowing medical aid from the International Red Cross or any other agency to reach the wounded and recover the bodies of the dead. Fourth, Israel did not allow food, water or electricity in the refugee camp. They disconnected it. All of this and the--the Geneva Convention consider it international war crimes. For those kinds of crimes...

MATTHEWS: Let me ask you a question, Mr. Rahman...

Mr. RAHMAN: Let--let me just finish my...(unintelligible). For those kinds of crimes, Milosevic now is sitting in a jail in The Hague, tried for war crimes. I wish that Mr. Sharon and Sharon...(unintelligible)...will be tried in the same way for war crimes against the Palestinians.

MATTHEWS: Let's get to the facts of the--of the case here. For days in this past week there have been attacks against the Israelis by the Arab side saying

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hundreds of people were killed in Jenin. Now we have evidence there was in the order of maybe 40 or so people. Do you have--I ask you again...

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes, I would...

MATTHEWS: ...Mr. Rahman, what evidence do you have that it was more than 40 and that those were, in fact, 40 fighters that were fighting the Israeli army as warriors?

Mr. RAHMAN: First of all, the bodies that are recovered so far is only in part of the refugee camp. Second, according to the United Nations Relief and War Agency that administers the refugee camp, there were 20,000 people living in the camp. They are accounting for 5,000 people. The rest, some of them have fled, some of them are dead and buried under the rubble. We will not know the number of people who have been killed by the Israelis. But evidently, the methods that were used by Israel...

MATTHEWS: OK.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...are immoral, inhuman and considered war crimes.

MATTHEWS: Let me go to Mr.--let's--let me go to Mr. Regev. I've given you quite a bit of time, Mr. Hasan. I want to give you each equal time here, Mr. Regev. And try to put what we're watching on television here, these scenes of de--demolition and disaster on the West Bank--it wasn't that pretty to begin with, I'd expect it looks horrible now--what is the Israeli plan? Why do you go through town after town cutting hundred-foot wide swaths of--of rubble? For what? What's the purpose of all this demolition?

Mr. REGEV: Well, the idea is to go after the terrorists, groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah.

MATTHEWS: But we're looking at what looks like--this looks like Hiroshima here, what we're looking at. That's not to go after--that doesn't look like man-to-man fighting. It looks like a demolition derby here.

Mr. REGEV: Can I tell you, Chris, I was in the infantry and there's no more difficult fighting than house-to-house fighting. It's much easier to bomb from the air or to shell from afar. We go in there specifically risking our boys in house-to-house fighting so as to avoid human casualties. Now, it doesn't look good. It's a combat zone. We had in Jenin about 24 casualties, people killed. We had another tens of people injured. It was difficult fighting. Houses were booby-trapped, there were bombs placed under streets. We had to move very, very carefully because they work and they shield behind women and children. They used the human civilians as a shield for the terrorists and it's a problem. But I'd like to stress a few points here. According to UN Security Council resolutions it is forbidden to have weapons in the refugee camps. The Palestinians clearly, clearly broke those resolutions. According to UN Security Council resolutions the Palestinians, the Palestinians should not be supporting terrorism. They are supporting terrorism from these territories. If the Palestinians had lived up to the Oslo agreement, if they had, in fact, stopped terrorism, we wouldn't have had to go in in the first place.

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MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. REGEV: We only went there in the first place because from a place like Jenin we had more than 20 suicide bombings just from Jenin.

MATTHEWS: OK. Let me go to Mr. Rahman for a final word.

Mr. RAHMAN: Yeah. First of all...

MATTHEWS: Mr. Rahman, I want to ask you a question about your personal life.

Mr. RAHMAN: Yeah?

MATTHEWS: Have you lived most of your life--where have you lived most of your life?

Mr. RAHMAN: Sorry?

MATTHEWS: Where did you live most of your life?

Mr. RAHMAN: In Ramallah.

MATTHEWS: Have you--are you allowed to return to your homeland right now? What's your status?

Mr. RAHMAN: No, I--I spent 29 years in exile. Mr. Regev was born, I believe, in Australia. He is only a citizen there. I was born there. My family has 800 years of history...(unintelligible)...

MATTHEWS: Why aren't you there now?

Mr. RAHMAN: Huh?

MATTHEWS: Why aren't you there now? Why aren't you in Ramallah now?

Mr. RAHMAN: Why I'm not in Ramallah? Because I left before Israeli occupation and I cannot return now to live there.

Mr. REGEV: I don't believe that's true.

Mr. RAHMAN: But anyway, that's beside the point.

Mr. REGEV: That's not true.

Mr. RAHMAN: Let me tell you one thing: Mr. Regev said two things. One is that they were house-to-house fighting. In fact, there was destruction of house after house by the Israelis. They used helicopters. They used tanks. The security council resolutions that he speaks of does not give Israel the right to be in the West Bank and Gaza because...

MATTHEWS: OK. OK.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...they are an illegal occupying force.

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MATTHEWS: Mr. Regev, we're going to have you back. We have a limited time...

Mr. REGEV: Can I say one thing, Chris?

MATTHEWS: Quickly.

Mr. REGEV: Just one thing. Chris...

Mr. RAHMAN: An illegal occupying force.

Mr. REGEV: ...all the PLO officials were allowed to return after peace. Mr. Rahman could have returned. For him to say that he can't return is not true. He is the representative of...(unintelligible).

Mr. RAHMAN: Come on.

MATTHEWS: OK. We'll have to talk to both of you later. We have plenty of time to continue this story of Abdel--of **Hasan Abdel Rahman** and his biography. I am curious still.

Up next, the HARDBALL DEBATE. Will UN inspections be effective--an effective way to make sure Saddam Hussein doesn't get the weapons of mass destruction? We're going to hear from two very different views. One guy say weapons of mass destruction must be destroyed. Another one believes we can stop them through inspections. You're watching HARDBALL.

(Announcements)

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SHOW: FOX HANNITY & COLMES (21:20)

April 16, 2002 Tuesday

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HEADLINE: Interview With **Hasan Abdel Rahman** and Alon Pinkas

GUESTS: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Alon Pinkas

BYLINE: Sean Hannity, Alan Colmes

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

HANNITY: Still to come tonight, has the latest videotape of Usama bin Laden given us any clues as to his whereabouts? Colonel Oliver North will be here. And later, will President Bush go down in history as a great president? Dick Morris -- he's here. He'll weigh in.

Plus, the HANNITY & COLMES question of the day: How many American presidents have dealt with the Mideast conflict since Israel's independence?

But, first, heavy gunfire today at the Church of the Nativity, the same day Israelis and Palestinians were supposed to negotiate a resolution to a

two-week-old standoff at the place Christians believe to be the birthplace of Jesus Christ.

Joining us from Washington, chief Palestinian representative to the U.S.,

Hasan Abdel Rahman. And joining us in studio is the Israeli consul general Alon Pinkas.

Mr. Rahman, I want to ask you this question. Yasser Arafat's wife just

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recently endorsed homicide bombers. I have her quotation right here. Yasser Arafat's signature was found on an invoice paying for explosive materials for homicide bombers. There have been more of these homicide bombings that have taken place in Israel, and Arafat has done nothing to stop it. Is he a terrorist?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN SPOKESMAN: No, he is not. Yasser Arafat is the elected leader of the Palestinian people. He was elected in a free, democratic elections with 2,000 international observers, and he is the leader of the Palestinian people.

HANNITY: It was -- there was this man that was arrested just yesterday by the Israeli forces.

There was an article in today's "New York Post," and it says that Israel has an intelligence intercept of a phone conversation between him and Yasser Arafat in which Arafat says, "When I go out publicly and I say in Arabic -- I call for peace, that is the signal to begin more terror."

You're denying that he has been -- ever been involved in terrorism. You're denying that his fingerprints are on the 50 tons of weapons. You're denying his endorsement, like his wife, of the suicide bombings.

RAHMAN: First of all, those are Israeli lies. Second, Yasser Arafat is a man whose country is under foreign military illegal, immoral occupation.

HANNITY: And Israel is a country that has been victim of multiple -- 70 terror attacks. Seventy!

RAHMAN: I hear you. But the Palestinian people have been under terrorism of the state of Israel for 36 years, and that's a long, long time. Neither you nor any decent human being in the world should neither acquiesce nor tolerate the deprivation of people of their basic human and political rights to live under foreign military occupancy.

COLMES: Let me get Consul -- General Consul Alon Pinkas in here.

Now, look, many people think that the Israelis and the Palestinians can't talk to each other, that the United States has to be involved, that Sharon can't talk to Arafat, doesn't want to, that Arafat can't talk to Sharon. Could you and the PLO spokesperson be able to talk to each other tonight and agree on something that could be a step toward peace?

ALON PINKAS, ISRAELI CONSUL GENERAL: Absolutely, but that's not where the decisions are made, on **HANNITY & COLMES**, with all my respect to you.

(CROSSTALK)

COLMES: That's not our function. We understand.

PINKAS: Decisions could have been made at Camp David. Someone did not show up at Camp David. Yasser Arafat. Instead, he hid weapons, he purchased weapons, he gave orders to -- for people to blow themselves up with innocents, the homicide maniacs.

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Now Mr. Abdel Rahman is right. He is the elected leader of the Palestinians, which says a lot about their choices, which says a lot about their Democracy, but, nevertheless, he's right. He is the elected leader of the Palestinian

people, with which we have dealt before, which we feel that we can no longer deal.

Now let me ask you a question. Which do you think is higher -- the number of cease-fire agreements that Arafat violated or the number...

COLMES: I'm no defender of Arafat. I -- but, look, Ariel Sharon has also, to the Palestinian mind, been culpable. There are Palestinian aid workers who claim they've been cuffed and beaten. There's an American colleague. There's workers -- a man named Jordan Flaherty (ph) brutally got a knee to the head, as being reported by an elite unit of the Israel Defense Forces.

PINKAS: Alan...

COLMES: We hear these stories every day as well from the West Bank.

PINKAS: Fine. Fine, which is why -- we hate the situation that exists, which is why we sought seriously resolutely to end it at Camp David.

They lied at Camp David. They said no to every idea the president -- President Clinton proposed. They said no to a comprehensive peace plan.

If you tell me that the gap that exists between what President Clinton presented and what the Palestinians feel that they deserve justifies 75 homicide attacks, then...

COLMES: Nobody is justifying homicide attacks.

But, Mr. Rahman, let me ask you about -- Sean mentioned this guy Marwan Barghouti, the Arafat lieutenant, major figure in the uprising, who had been a moderate and began financing the Al Aqsa Martyr Brigades, according to a paper trail they found, and that there's proof of payments from Arafat to Barghouti for these brigades. Wouldn't that implicate Arafat in terrorism?

RAHMAN: First of all, let me say something to our colleague, Mr...

COLMES: I would love it if you'd answer my question.

RAHMAN: I will. But, first of all, he says that we lied in Camp David. He lies every single time he appears on television. First of all, he says Arafat did not show in Camp David. We were in Camp David. Were you alone in Camp David?

HANNITY: All right.

RAHMAN: Yasser Arafat was in Camp David.

HANNITY: Mr...

RAHMAN: Let me finish, please.

PINKAS: No, I don't think he was.

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RAHMAN: He was in Camp...

PINKAS: I don't think he was.

RAHMAN: You were not in Camp David. Yasser Arafat was in Camp David.

PINKAS: You lose your temper every evening. That's very bad for you, Hasan.

RAHMAN: No, no. I am not losing -- you know why? Because I can't tolerate lies.

PINKAS: No, I...

RAHMAN: You are lying to the public. You are saying Yasser Arafat was not in Camp David.

PINKAS: I should take you from the great democracy that you installed.

RAHMAN: Wait a second. You elected Sharon. Sharon for us is a terrorist. He is responsible...

PINKAS: We elected...

(CROSSTALK)

PINKAS: ... and you double-crossed them. The Americans elected Clinton, and you double-crossed him.

RAHMAN: You -- you -- Mr. Civilized, let me finish. Second, we elected Sharon. We believe Sharon is a terrorist. Half of the Israeli people believe

Sharon is a terrorist. There was a commission in Israel that indicted Sharon for the massacres in...

HANNITY: All right. Let me...

RAHMAN: He is the only man...

HANNITY: All right. I...

RAHMAN: ... in Israel who cannot...

HANNITY: All right. Mr. Rahman, let me jump in.

PINKAS: Mr. Rahman, you're losing it again.

HANNITY: Let me...

PINKAS: You have to read history before going on these shows. I told you once. I'm telling you again.

HANNITY: Mr. Rahman, let me...

(CROSSTALK)

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PINKAS: You don't understand. You don't get it, sir.

RAHMAN: You know what upsets me? A man who lies. That upsets me.

HANNITY: All right. Mr. Rahman, let me ask you a question, if I may, sir.

RAHMAN: Yes. Please do.

HANNITY: Yasser Arafat's wife described the suicide attacks -- these are attacks against innocent women and children. She described them as -- quote -- "a legitimate resistance tactic" and said it would be no greater honor than to even sacrifice her own son. Do you condemn her support of terror?

RAHMAN: First of all, let me tell you this.

HANNITY: Yes or no?

RAHMAN: You should -- you should ask me about my opinion. I'll tell you I have not heard what she said, and I don't want to hear what she said. I'll tell you what I think. I am opposed wholeheartedly to any killing of civilians...

HANNITY: OK.

RAHMAN: ... by suicide bombers or by Israeli soldiers of Palestinian civilians.

HANNITY: Mr. Rahman, we have only a few seconds. I want to go to Pinkas.

Mr. Pinkas, Saudi Arabia -- their top leaders have now supported terror, and they're on record. What should the United States do about Saudi Arabia?

PINKAS: Now that's something that the United States administration...

HANNITY: Are you upset about it?

PINKAS: Of course I'm upset about it. The Saudis are the reasons that there's no agreement at Camp David, the Saudis colluding with Arafat. The Saudis are the reason that there is still a refugee camp in Jenin. Where is all the money that could have been funneled to the brothers in Palestine? And the Saudis are the reason that we are sitting here and talking about bin Laden and Arafat on the same show.

HANNITY: All right. thanks, Mr. Pinkas. Thank you, Mr. Rahman. Thank you. And coming right up, does this video look like it was doctored? We'll get the very latest from Colonel Oliver North.

And later on, we're going to talk to principle in politics. Dick Morris's new book. He'll join us. Straight ahead.

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GUESTS: Chris Wolfe, James Murphy, David Shipler

BYLINE: Lou Dobbs, , Wolf Blitzer, Kitty Pilgrim, Jamie McIntyre, Tim O'Brien, Lucia Newman, Greg Clarkin, Christine Romans

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LOU DOBBS, CNNfn ANCHOR, LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE: Tonight in the Middle East, a hardening of positions by both the Israelis and the Palestinians. Israel's prime minister says there can be no peace with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Secretary of State Colin Powell is appealing to both Syria and Lebanon to stop terrorists. Richard Murphy, former ambassador to Syria and Saudi Arabia is my guest.

The FBI is investigating the secretary of the Army. The charge, possible insider trading. Thomas White is a former Enron vice chairman. Investigators want to know whether he acted in inside information before selling Enron stock last year.

Venezuelan president Hugo Chaves returns to power less than two days after being forced to resign. The United States pleased with Chavez' ouster, and there are unconfirmed rumors of U.S. involvement. We'll have a live report from Caracas.

And a multi-million dollar railcar takes a test run on the International Space Station. We'll have a progress report on that mission in space, and we'll

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tell you how the new construction project is faring.

ANNOUNCER: This is LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE for Monday, April 15. Here now, Lou Dobbs.

DOBBS: Good evening, tonight the chances for an Arab-Israeli peace process appear insurmountable. Yasser Arafat says there can be no peace agreement until Israel withdraws in the West Bank. Israel says there will be no deal until the terrorism stops. Today the secretary of state met with the leaders of Syria and Lebanon. For more on the story, I am joined by Wolf Blitzer in Jerusalem -- Wolf.

WOLF BLITZER, CNN ANCHOR: Thank you very much, Lou. The secretary of state is trying to diffuse that situation along the border between Israel and Lebanon. Secretary of state insisting that it's a tense situation, that's why he went to Beirut. Later he went to Damascus to try to diffuse any problems. He's returned now back to Jerusalem, that's where he is right now.

At the same time, the Israeli prime minister Aerial Sharon is suggesting that Israel will withdraw from all of the places it's recently reoccupied in the West Bank with the exception of Ramallah, the headquarters area around where Yasser Arafat remains holed up, as well as the Church of the Nativity near manger's square in Bethlehem, where some 200 Palestinian gunmen remained holed up. He says the Israelis will stay in those two locations until both of those issues are resolved. But in Bethlehem, the prime minister insisted there was an opportunity to resolve the matter peacefully.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ARIEL SHARON, ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER: Agreement is very simple one; they have to leave their weapons behind. They must come out. They're going to be identified, and those that have no connection with terror will be released immediately. Those that have relations or are well-connected or participated in acts of murder and let's say have been members of terrorist organizations, they will have two possibilities, one to be tried in Israel, and the other one to be

expelled or deported from the area to a country.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Palestinians quickly rejected Ariel Sharon's proposal, insisting it was a non-starter. Indeed, aides to Yasser Arafat say they were deeply disappointed in what they heard from the prime minister of Israel. Listen for example, to Saeb Erakat, the chief Palestinian negotiator had to say.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SAEB ERAKAT, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: It's really ironic that this man says he is committed to peace. What peace when you built 35 settlements in one year? What peace when you confiscate Palestinian land? He denies occupation. He denies Palestinian's cry for freedom. He never mentioned the word that "I will pull out."

(END VIDEO CLIP)

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BLITZER: At the same time all this was occurring, the Israelis arrested detained Marawan Bargudi (ph). He's the secretary-general of the Fattah movement, Yasser Arafat's movement. The Israeli's insist he was involved in direct suicide bomb terrorist activities against Israelis. They say he and his nephew, both of whom were picked up, will remain under Israeli police control as they proceed with court action against him.

Meanwhile, the secretary of state, as I said, now back in Jerusalem from talks with Bashar Al-Assad, the president of Syria, the leadership of Lebanon, the Israeli officials are saying they hope he succeeded in diffusing that crisis, but at the same time, the Hezbollah guerrillas in southern Lebanon, it's unclear whether Syria and Lebanon can completely control those Hezbollah guerrillas, many of whom of course are influenced by Iran as well -- Lou.

DOBBS: Wolf, is there in all of this anything positive on the parts of the staffs of either the Israeli prime minister or secretary of state Powell, any suggestion that there is any positive whatsoever over these past few days?

BLITZER: Well, that one little nugget of hope, Lou, for the so-called regional conference that the Israelis have proposed, perhaps at the foreign ministers level. There was some hope that maybe that could be achieved. The secretary of state has an enormous challenge ahead of him. He was originally planning on meeting with Yasser Arafat tomorrow, Tuesday in Ramallah, but that has now been postponed for another 24 hours until Wednesday.

Powell will meet with Sharon tomorrow here in Israel, but I have to tell you that it does not look very promising given the depth, given the strong feelings on both the Palestinian and the Israeli side. I think it's fair to say secretary of state Colin Powell is facing what many observers here in Israel and among the Palestinians have said "mission impossible."

DOBBS: Wolf, thank you very much. Wolf Blitzer doing his usual terrific job covering this story tonight from Jerusalem. No one has, of course, found a solution to end the violence in the Middle East, but the idea of raising fences to keep Palestinians out of Israel has been debated. Such fences already exist in Gaza and in certain Jerusalem neighborhoods, but now new fences are being proposed that would cover a lot more ground. Kitty Pilgrim has the report.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

KITTY PILGRIM, CNNfn CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): A daily ritual: Palestinians workers going into Israel passing through checkpoints. In the past, Israel's economy has very much depended on Palestinian labor. Foreign workers make up 13 percent of Israel's work force. At one point, 150,000 Palestinians traveled from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to work in Israel. Now that number is diminished to an estimated 2,000, primarily from Asia, the Philippines, Taiwan. Many say the

displacement has been a disaster for Israel's economy.

JUDITH BARNETT, PA CONSULTING GROUP: At the end of the day, Israel's economy does need Palestinian workers, and at least in the short term, Palestinian workers need to be working in Israel. The truth is no wall has really worked effectively over time, particularly on economies that to some degree need each other.

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PILGRIM: For Palestinians, the loss of employment in Israel has sent unemployment soaring to an estimated 50 percent. More fences simply means more isolation. In Sunday's "New York Times," Israel's former prime minister Ehud Barak writes in an article titled "Israel's Security Requires a Sturdy Fence," quote, "Israel must embark unilateral disengagement from the Palestinians and establish a system of security fences. Israel's very future depends on this."

Advocates of the fence argue that around the Gaza Strip there is a fence and there are practically no suicide attacks originating from Gaza.

PATRICK CLAWSON, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE: For a long time now the Gaza Strip has effectively been fenced in, but there has been gates in that fence, and so large numbers of people have been able to come through those gates. So building a fence, that's an idea that has got a fair amount of support.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

PILGRIM: The Israeli economy cannot get away from the fact that it needs foreign workers. For Palestinian workers, the connection is also critical. By official estimates, in normal times about one third of Palestinians depend on jobs in Israel, and now the economy in Gaza has all but collapsed and aid is now replacing jobs -- Lou.

DOBBS: More progress to report. Thanks.

Secretary of state Colin Powell's diplomatic efforts seem designed to put the Oslo agreements back into play, but some say only a dramatic initiative can now save this peace process. The question tonight is whether the idea of a regional conference goes far enough? Amongst many other questions. Joining me now is Richard Murphy, a former U.S. ambassador to both Saudi Arabia and Syria, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. Ambassador, good to have you here.

AMB. JAMES MURPHY, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS: Thank you.

DOBBS: Any hope in terms of what you've been able to assess from the secretary of state's mission, any hope of success?

MURPHY: There's always some hope. It's a troubled, very troubled time, but his trip today to Beirut and Damascus I think show signs of putting a damper on the immediate prospect of this fire spreading in the region. I don't think Lebanon, Syria, Iran want any blow up on the northern border of Israel. They don't want that kind of confrontation, but back in the Palestinian camp, where that's going is very problematic right now.

DOBBS: It's problematic, it's been problematic for a very, very long time.

MURPHY: Fifty years.

DOBBS: I found it interesting that last Friday Kofi Annan puts forward a proposal for -- at the United Nations for an international peacekeeping force. Several major newspapers did not even report the secretary-general's statements.

MURPHY: Yes.

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DOBBS: Why in the world would there not be an openness at least to the idea?

MURPHY: As far as the American administration, the Bush administration is concerned, I think it's far ahead of where they are at this point. All that

Secretary Powell apparently took with him was the president's statement at the G-8 conference last year, a small number of American, purely American, monitors. That's a long way from an international peacekeeping force.

DOBBS: Yes, it is, but I suspect that's why the secretary-general made what was a rather bold initiative.

MURPHY: It was. He's been deeply troubled as you know, by the present humanitarian crisis, that the Palestinian Authority has been destroyed, the whole service network.

DOBBS: The Palestinian Authority is destroyed and Palestinians within and without Israel, 40 percent literacy rate, 40 percent unemployed, and then we move to the cycle of unended violence. The United States is honest broker in this, and it's an important and long-lasting process, but at some point when does the United States, this administration and Democratic administrations decide that we haven't got a role as an honest broker.

We have been in support of Israel, it was our recognition more than 50 years ago that founded the nation and gave it security. When do we say that it's time for the world community to take charge of what is to this point an insoluble conflict?

MURPHY: I've heard that tone emerging in this administration, unlike in Bush-one and before and certainly under Clinton, it was very possessive attitude, this is the American peace process, don't mess around. We know what we're doing, we'll manage it, and that word went to Europe, that word went to the U.N.'s secretary-general, very plain, very blunt.

Now we're talking about welcoming the Europeans, the U.N. secretary-general, the Russians, maybe it's welcoming them to the poverty of ideas, nobody knows what can be done right now, but there is a much more of an open door towards others.

DOBBS: Your great experience and knowledge of the region, the idea that Iran, that Syria, Lebanon would have any calculated interest in joining this conflict is one of the potentialities that's always talked about. Just how overblown is that suggestion?

MURPHY: Well, there's no appetite for war in the Arab world. Now, Iran has taken -- non-Arab, a very distinctly hostile position towards Israel ever since the Iranian revolution. The state should not exist, the Jews can stay, it should not be a Jewish state, it should be a majority Muslim-Arab state.

DOBBS: And in terms of Syria and its relationship, its de facto control of Lebanon, is it your judgment that it has the capacity to control the Hezbollah?

MURPHY: Not complete control. I think that control has waned over the last few years, but when Bashar El-Assad told Powell, "I will speak to Hezbollah," I think that's a very good sign. I saw Bashar just myself about two weeks ago and

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he said then that actually the head of Hezbollah, Sheik Nasrallah (ph) had been keeping an extraordinarily tight control on the border and deserved credit that, but that was before the Katyusha rockets started flying in the last 10 days.

DOBBS: And vis--vis Saudi Arabia once putting forth through the Crown Prince Abdullah on initiative to try to at least begin a dialogue in coming to some sort of cease-fire and perhaps a solution. At the same time the Saudis raising money for the families of suicide bombers.

MURPHY: For the families of the victims, they've been doing that from day one. They have had one telethon raising money for the widows and the orphans, and what we know about the suicide bombers is that their own families didn't know they were going out to play that role.

DOBBS: Is this, given all the events of the past few months, actually the

last now seven months, is this an unalterable change in the Saudi-U.S. relationship?

MURPHY: No, I think there's been a lot of stress on it, but if you recall just after September 11 the Saudis very quietly pushed up production so that among our other worries we wouldn't have any concern about the flow of oil, and they've repeatedly said the oil would not be used as a weapon. They are finding our military presence awkward, embarrassing, and very much criticized by Osama bin Laden and others in the country.

DOBBS: The same presence, I might say, Mr. Ambassador, in 1990 and 1991, assured their security along with that of the Kuwaitis.

MURPHY: Eleven years ago that was absolutely true and times have changed.

DOBBS: Indeed they have, but it seems the many layers of diplomacy in this, and if you will, some deceit on the part of a number of the Arab states in the way we prosecute the war against terror at a time when allies are required, doesn't seem particularly helpful. That seems sort of timeless in its frustration.

MURPHY: Well, it is, but the administration has kept that distinction up front, which I welcome, between Osama bin Laden the al Qaeda network and Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Authority. They have resisted the pressure from some in Israel, who say they're one in the same, it's all the same terror.

DOBBS: Is it your judgment -- given this, and the world, the global interest in the oil that of course dominates the economy of the region, that stability can be maintained irrespective of the success or failure of the secretary of state's mission?

MURPHY: Well, A, I'm not writing off the secretary's mission, but there are strains in the region now. There's a whole population explosion there, there's a shortage of jobs, there are young people coming out on the market without work, and young people not being trained for a modern economy, all too many of them trained in the religious schools that don't provide them the technical know-how to move into the modern Saudi Arabia or the modern Gulf states.

So there's a lot of work to be done. There is still communications open

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between the rulers and the ruled there. So I'm not pessimistic about any early breakdown in the systems.

DOBBS: That doesn't translate to optimism, but in these days of trial we'll take not-pessimistic.

MURPHY: OK.

DOBBS: Mr. Ambassador, thanks for being here.

MURPHY: Thank you.

DOBBS: My next guest says the first step toward peace must be a stand off between the two sides based on perception of equal power. David Shipler joins me now from Washington. David won a Pulitzer prize in 1987 for his book "Arabs and Jews, Wounded Spirits In A Promised." David, thank you for being here.

DAVID SHIPLER, AUTHOR: Great to be here.

DOBBS: I asked Ambassador Murphy this question, do you see any reason to frankly, to be positive given the developments that you were observing?

SHIPLER: Well, I'm a journalist, so I'm a professional pessimist in any event. No, I don't, actually. I think that both sides have really fought themselves into a very, very dangerous situation, and I mean dangerous not only in terms of weaponry, but -- and death, but dangerous in terms of what is being done inside people's minds.

You know, we -- there are a lot of events that are taking place that don't make the news because nobody's been killed, but I think they're very damaging. I

received an e-mail a couple of days ago from an 18-year-old Palestinian girl in Ramallah who described Israeli soldiers coming into her house at 5:00 in the morning, taking over her house, hurting her family, herding her family with others, pointing guns at little children who were crying, and she asked the question about these Palestinian children who have had this experience, what kind of people are they going to grow up to be?

I think we have to be thinking about this, and I think the Israelis are doing damage to their own side and the Palestinians are doing damage to their own side.

DOBBS: You wrote in this morning's "Times" that you believe part of the solution is that the Palestinians should have something to lose. That can be, one can infer many things from that suggestion. What is your meaning?

SHIPLER: My meaning in that particular article was that they need a state to defend and to care about, because that will presumably induce them not to attack Israel, because they know now what happens when they attack Israel.

This was Israel's strategy for many years with its Arab neighbors, to hold those neighbors responsible for the ways in which their territory was used. And to understand that if they allowed terrorists to come across the borders, Israel would hit back at them very hard.

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For example, the Israeli-Syrian border has been quiet for almost 30 years without a peace treaty between the two countries, because Syria knows very well what would happen if they permitted terrorists to come into Israel from Syrian territory. Jordan and Egypt had quiet borders before their peace treaties with Israel.

Where this strategy has not worked is on lands where there has not been a strong government. For example, in Lebanon, during the Lebanon Civil War, as the government in Beirut weakened and chaos reigned in the south near the Israeli border, there was no leverage that Israel had over Lebanon to combat the militias that grew up and the PLO that took its bases there. The same thing is true in the West Bank and Gaza. There has not been much of a government. There have been enclaves governed by Arafat, but the Israeli occupation has been very strong, so the Palestinians have not really felt that they've had anything to lose by refraining from attacking Israel.

DOBBS: David, that is so true in nearly every since of measure that one could apply to the Palestinians in the region. The suggestion of a Palestinian state, let me ask you for your best judgment about Kofi Annan's call for international peacekeepers, a peacekeeping force that would be, as he put it, strong enough to deter any challenge whatsoever. What do you think of the idea? And what do you think of the remarkable silence that has surrounded the reception of that proposal?

SHIPLER: Well, you can't have peacekeepers until you have peace to keep, so putting foreign troops in an unfamiliar area would make them targets, I'm afraid at this point. Now, ultimately if there were complete agreement by both Israelis and Palestinians that they had separated, there were secure borders, that they needed some intermediate force to patrol those borders, it's possible.

I'm worried about American troops getting involved, because the U.S. is associated with Israel very strongly in the minds of the Arab world anyway. And if American troops patrolled Jerusalem, let's say, and Israel still had possession of the city and its holy places, I think the United States would be very, very closely identified in people's minds with facilitating the Israeli occupation. So I think there are a lot of dangers in the idea even though I sympathize with Kofi Annan's sentiments, because the situation is desperate.

DOBBS: You seem to suggest, as I asked Ambassador Murphy, that the United States has a very difficult position here, trying to pose as an honest broker. Who then should broker whatever cease-fire, whatever peace, whatever solution is to come?

SHIPLER: Well, there's no escape for the United States from that role in fact. We are the most powerful country in the world. We do have lines of communication with both sides. We are in fact Israel's benefactor. We provide \$3 billion a year in aide, including...

DOBBS: But given all of that, David, how in the world, how in the world can this administration or any suggest that it can effectively position itself as an honest broker?

SHIPLER: Well, I think each side, both sides would have to want that to happen. That is, Israel and the Palestinian would have to need and desire the

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United States to play the role.

DOBBS: OK, David, thank you very much for being with us, we appreciate you taking the time. Please come back soon.

SHIPLER: Thank you.

DOBBS: Still ahead here, a new videotape of Osama bin Laden. It's being shown on Arab television. Our Pentagon correspondent will be here to tell us what the tape says and does not say about Osama bin Laden. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: It doesn't matter whether you're a Republican or whether you're a Democrat or whether you don't even give a darn about political parties. This country is united when it comes to defending the freedoms we hold dear.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

DOBBS: The Pentagon tonight is examining a new videotape of Osama bin Laden. The tape, broadcast today by the Arab television station Al Jazeera, shows previously unseen footage of bin Laden. Military affairs correspondent Jamie McIntyre has the story for us tonight from the Pentagon -- Jamie.

JAMIE MCINTYRE, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, Lou, it's previously unseen footage, but it's not clear how useful it is. This tape was part of an hour-long tape that was hand delivered to Al Jazeera about a week ago. The first snippet released by Al Jazeera shows a Ayman Al-Zawahiri (ph) a top deputy to Osama bin Laden seated next to bin Laden side by side on the ground, what appears to be a setting outside, Zawahiri is heard on the tape to say in Arabic, "this great victory that has been accomplished can be attributed to God alone."

So it appears that this was made after September 11, but other than that, the time frame is unclear. A second clip released by Al Jazeera shows a man who appears to be one of the hijackers who was on United Airlines flight 93 that crashed in Pennsylvania, Amid Haznari (ph), who the FBI says was aboard that flight, is seen on the tape as saying it's time to kill Americans on their own soil, among their sons and next to their soldiers.

Again, a chilling reference apparently taped before the September 11 attacks. Now, the Pentagon says it appears that there's not much new footage here, and today Defense Secretary Rumsfeld could only speculate about the possible motives for the tape's release.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD RUMSFELD, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE: Maybe, maybe they are anxious to inject some more energy into what they're doing. Maybe they're trying to let the world know that the senior people are still alive and well. Maybe they're trying

to pretend to the world that they're still alive and well even though they're not.

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(END VIDEO CLIP)

MCINTYRE: The key thing is that these tapes offer no evidence of whether Osama bin Laden is alive or dead or what condition he's in. fact, the most recent tapes that the U.S. has seen seem to indicate he was in much poorer health than in this tape where he is not heard talking. But at this point the Pentagon says they still don't know where he is, they have to assume he's alive because they don't have any evidence that he's dead --Lou.

DOBBS: Jamie, just to be clear, the hijacker -- obviously that tape taken before the events of September 11 -- Osama bin Laden, any indication as the Pentagon has vetted these tapes as to when it was made?

MCINTYRE: It's not clear that the Pentagon has had a chance to examine any of the tapes in their original form. All the indications are that those tapes were shot sometime last year after September 11. Again, there's nothing on there that indicates that they find to be particular useful. They say the tape appears to be old footage clipped together.

DOBBS: Jamie, thank you very much. Jamie McIntyre reporting tonight from the Pentagon.

The FBI tonight is investigating the secretary of the Army, Thomas White, for one of the most serious violations of securities law; insider trading. White is a former vice chairman of Enron. White sold half his holdings in the company, about \$3 million in stock just about one month before the energy company collapsed. Tim O'Brien has the story tonight from Washington -- Tim.

TIM O'BRIEN, CNNfn CORRESPONDENT: Lou, sources do tell CNN the FBI has opened a criminal investigation into whether Army secretary Thomas White may have engaged in some illegal insider trading. As you said, last October he sold a little over \$3 million Enron stock, half his holdings at the time.

He was an executive with Enron's energy services unit for 11 years before moving to the Pentagon, and he maintained close ties with his former colleagues.

The "Wall Street Journal" reports FBI agents have been interviewing many of those colleagues about the timing of White's Enron stock transactions.

White has been adamant that as secretary of the Army nobody asked him to do anything for Enron, that he didn't ask for any inside information and he didn't get any.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

THOMAS WHITE, SECRETARY OF THE ARMY: At no time ever in this process did anybody ask me to do anything on behalf of the corporation, nor did I, nor did they provide me anything that could have been construed in any way as any sort of insider information that I could have used for economic benefit. So that's the point.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

O'BRIEN: But White and his wife had many personal friends in high places at Enron. And the secretary says the calls were mostly personal, many made by his

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wife, mostly calls for concern for former colleagues as the company's sagging fortunes were becoming increasingly public.

White has become one of President Bush's most controversial appointments. Last month, both Democrats and Republicans on the Senate Armed Services Committee scolded him for misrepresenting some of his lingering ties with Enron. He's acknowledged that he continued to hold an interest in Enron stock long

after having told Congress he would have divested himself. Now, no one is accusing White directly of breaking any laws. And for his part, he's conceded he may have been naive about the often complicated conflict of interest rules to those who hold high government positions here in Washington -- Lou.

DOBBS: To be clear, Tim, again, the FBI is investigating these charges at the behest of the SEC?

O'BRIEN: The SEC has been looking into it as well, but right now, these investigations seem to be on hold. They're making the phone calls, but it's difficult to make out a case here. For one, these \$3 million in stock that he sold, those stock were sold at about \$16 a share. So it's about one-fifth of what the stock would have been a year earlier. If that's inside information, it came very late. The SEC is also investigating.

DOBBS: Absolutely. OK. Tim, thank you very much, Tim O'Brien.

Oil prices gained more than a dollar a barrel as Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez today returned to power. The move reassured the markets that Venezuela would remain committed to OPEC, honoring production quotas. Before Chavez' presidency, the country was the biggest quota violator. Also boosting prices today, renewed calls from Iran for Islamic nations to enforce an oil embargo.

Light sweet crude oil rose \$1.10, settling at \$24.57 a barrel.

Hugo Chavez is now offering an olive branch to his opponents now that he's back in the presidential palace. Chavez' supporters have been looting stores and attacking an opposition controlled town hall. Lucia Newman is in the Venezuelan capital of Caracas -- Lucia.

LUCIA NEWMAN, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Good evening, Lou. Well, rectify and reconcile, that's the message today from President Hugo Chavez on his first full day back at work since his short-lived ouster from power.

In a news conference today, he did offer an olive branch to all sectors of the society, especially to his enemies. He said that there would be no witch hunt, that the government would treat the coup leaders humanely, he said. He also said that tomorrow, a special council would be formed where all sectors of society are being invited to participate, including the business sector which has been so vehemently opposed to the government of President Chavez.

He also said that Pedro Carmona (ph), the business leader who had been briefly named the interim president while Mr. Chavez was under arrest, that he said that he had hoped that he would be allowed to go home soon. He indicated that he really wasn't the person who had been behind the coup, but he wouldn't indicate who he thought the real culprits were.

Now, President Chavez also took personal responsibility for what he said had

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been his own mistakes, he said. He recognized, rather, that perhaps he had gone too far when he often attacked his enemies publicly on television. He promised he wouldn't do that anymore and he received applause. He also said he was sorry about the deaths of at least a dozen government opponents on Thursday during an anti-government march which was fired on by gunmen. He said that that would be investigated. These were his words.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HUGO CHAVEZ, VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT (through translator): I deeply regret the deaths of a group of Venezuelans during the latest developments. I point no finger to anyone as the assassin, for the investigations of the jurisdictional branches will decide and establish responsibility. In the meantime, refraining from pointing or accusing anyone, since that is not my job, I call upon everyone to reflect so this never happens again.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

NEWMAN: Now, the looting, the widespread looting that we saw here yesterday in Venezuela seems to have subsided substantially. In fact, there have been no new reports of looting so far, although in some upper-class neighborhoods, schools were closed and some shops were closed too for fear that this would continue.

But right now, things are pretty calm here, Lou. And, in fact, when I was speaking about the conciliatory tone of President Chavez, he's also offering an olive branch to the United States, which has not been able to hide its disappointment over the fact that President Chavez is now back in power, Lou.

DOBBS: And what form would that olive branch take?

NEWMAN: Well, for example, there had been reports of a plane with the U.S. number plates that had been seen at the base where -- at the Caribbean island base where President Chavez had been held while he was still under arrest. He says that he is going to give United States the benefit of the doubt, although there have been rumors and implications that somebody from the United States or perhaps even the U.S. government could have been involved.

But he says that that's not the case. He wants to give the United States a chance, he says, to really know what's going on in this country. So, he's is offering an olive branch to everyone, but it is still to be seen how that will be taken in this country, which is still deeply, deeply divided, Lou.

DOBBS: Hugo Chavez making, then, a gracious return to power after a very brief absence. Lucia Newman, thank you very much, reporting tonight from Caracas.

Still ahead here, earnings worries taking the shine off the markets today.

Equities strategist Chris Wolf will be here to tell us exactly what is going on.

Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DOBBS: The business of education. And by any standard, Philadelphia's school
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MONEYLINE 06:00 PM Eastern Standard Time April 15, 2002 Monday system is a failure. Half of that system's 200,000 students can't pass basic math and reading tests. And Philadelphia schools have already lost \$200 million this year. Now, the state is ready to try something new, turning over control of Philadelphia's schools to a private company. Greg Clarkin has the report.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GREG CLARKIN, CNNfn CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The battle for control of Philadelphia's public schools has more to do with power, politics and money, than it does with reading, writing and arithmetic. Dozens of the city's schools are expected to be turned over to for-profit educators such as Edison Schools

(Company: Edison Schools Inc.; Ticker: EDSN; URL:

<http://www.edisonschools.com/>). That's an idea Philadelphia's education establishment has fought tooth and nail.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I guess you could take all the kids and just dump them in the Atlantic Ocean. You could call that radical reform. The idea that somebody says we need reform, all our progress is not forward, and that's my point.

CLARKIN: Fattah (ph) has hammered away at Edison, saying the company doesn't improve schools, and in many cases, takes bad schools and makes them worse. A recent press release from his office cites more than a dozen Edison failures.

But calls to many of the districts listed found a number of contradictions.

In Minneapolis, Fattah says Edison's contract for one school is being severed because of low student achievement and other problems. A spokesman for the Minneapolis schools calls that a false assumption and says there is absolutely no dissatisfaction with Edison's academic performance. In Philly, even Edison's sinking stock has been a target.

BARBARA GOODMAN, AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS: It's at the bottom of its 52-week low point and its own corporate officials are selling stock like crazy.

This isn't a ringing endorsement for this company.

CLARKIN: The stock is near its low, but Thomson Financial analyzed insider trades and found just one instance where multiple executives sold shares. That was almost a year ago when (UNINTELLIGIBLE) was hitting its all-time high.

(on camera): More than \$320 billion is spent on K-12 education every year in the U.S. And what Edison and a host of smaller companies are attempting to do is grab a piece of that and say that education can be a profitable business.

(voice-over): Edison executives say what many fear is one of the companies stated goals; running schools more efficiently and economically.

CHRIS WHITTLE, CEO. EDISON SCHOOLS: Our whole business model is to actually spend more at schools than is currently spent in America and spend less at central offices that run schools.

CLARKIN: And in a district the size of Philadelphia's, that means going after administrators and other non-teaching positions.

Greg Clarkin, CNN Financial News, Philadelphia.

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(END VIDEOTAPE)

DOBBS: Coming up next, the Dow Jones Industrial Average, broader markets all down on the day. Equity strategist Chris Wolfe will be here to tell us how people should be positioning themselves. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DOBBS: On Wall Street, the markets moved lower today. Renewed concerns about GE (Company: General Electric Company; Ticker: GE ; URL: <http://www.ge.com/>) and disappointing earnings from Citigroup (Company: Citigroup Inc.; Ticker: C; URL: <http://www.citi.com/>) weighing on the Dow. The broader market falling to a seven-week low. The Dow down 97 points today. The Nasdaq fell two points. The S&P 500 down almost 8.5. But those losses coming on light volumes so there's some consolation to some. Christine Romans is here to tell us about all about the day.

CHRISTINE ROMANS, CNNfn CORRESPONDENT: Well, 24 of the Dow stocks ended lower, and hardest hit were airline and transportation stocks and retailers and banking stocks. General Electric was the most active stock; 66 million shares and the stock is down 14 percent in three days.

An article in the Sunday "New York Times" questioned whether GE's nonstop growth can continue. GE called the article biased and one-sided. Separately, GE Capital said it will cut 7,000 jobs this year. Citigroup earnings missed Wall Street targets. That stock fell 2 1/2 percent. Consumer stocks Wal*Mart (Company: Wal*Mart Stores Inc.; Ticker: WMT ; URL: <http://www.wal-mart.com/>), Coke (Company: The Coca-Cola Company ; Ticker: KO ; URL: <http://www.cocacola.com/>) and Procter & Gamble (Company: The Procter & Gamble Company; Ticker: PG ; URL: <http://www.pg.com/>) also down.

Now for some good news; AOL Time Warner (Company: AOL Time Warner; Ticker: AOL; URL: <http://www.aol.com/>) shares rallied 6 percent after a "Barron's" article suggested the stock had become too cheap. The stock is down 40 percent this year, 63 percent down from its 52-week high.

Oil stocks, ChevronTexaco (Company: ChevronTexaco Coporation; Ticker: CVX; URL: <http://chevrontexaco.com/>) rose 2 percent and Smith International (Company: Smith International Inc.; Ticker: SII; URL: <http://www.smith-intl.com/>) was among the big winners. Eli Lilly (Company: Eli Lilly & Company; Ticker: LLY; URL: <http://www.lilly.com/>) stock rose 4 percent, even as profit fell 22 percent because of generic competition to Prozac. Lilly also affirmed second quarter

guidance. And Priceline (Company: Priceline.com Inc.; Ticker: PCLN; URL: <http://www.priceline.com/>) jumped 10 percent after Thomas Weisel (ph) upgraded it on valuation after Priceline's 30 percent drop in its stock price so far this year.

Tomorrow, the focus is on Dow earnings. Reporting quarterly results are Caterpillar (Company: Caterpillar Inc.; Ticker: CAT ; URL: <http://www.caterpillar.com/>), Coke, General Motors (Company: General Motors Corporation; Ticker: GM; URL: <http://www.gm.com/>), Intel (Company: Intel Corporation ; Ticker: INTC ; URL: <http://www.intel.com/>) and Johnson & Johnson (Company: Johnson & Johnson ; Ticker: JNJ ; URL: <http://www.jnj.com/>) -- Lou.
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DOBBS: Christine, thank you very much.

More than a third of the S&P is expected to report quarterly results this is week. Analysts are expecting a 10 percent decline in those results from a year ago. I'm joined now by Chris Wolfe from JP Morgan Private Bank.

Good to have you hear, Chris.

CHRIS WOLFE, JP MORGAN PRIVATE BANK: Thanks, Lou.

DOBBS: These earnings, what we've seen so far is not exactly the stuff of excitement.

WOLFE: No, and I wouldn't label it that way either. In fact, it could be the tip of the iceberg for some interesting changes that are coming up. When we look at the different sectors of the market, we think there's a group of stocks that are ahead of themselves. I might call it the materials companies, the energy companies and particularly technology companies. They have two things we find a little bit worrisome; very high earnings expectations for this year and next year, and they also have high P/E multiples. So you have this leverage effect as investors have already built up the gains. They are anticipating them already.

DOBBS: It is, to me at least, peculiar to hear you say technology companies ahead of themselves, because they have been ahead of themselves forever, but beaten down over the course of the last two years. How in the world can people continue to raise their expectations on these companies?

WOLFE: We find it a bit disconcerting. Even for high quality companies, like a Siebel (Company: Siebel Systems Inc.; Ticker: SEBL; URL: <http://www.siebel.com/>) is at 35 times next year's earnings. And by the way, they told us that the first quarter was a disaster. It's not to say that all companies are bad, but I think it's a much more selective game in this environment, and effectively to manage this downside risk around earnings season, this pre-announcement risk we have been focusing on companies that have either preannounced already to the upside or managing it with sectors where it would have consistent growth patterns, like healthcare and consumer staples.

DOBBS: In terms of expectations, what are you advising your clients to expect in the way of returns this calendar year?

WOLFE: In 2002 looking at fair value for the S&P right about where they are, about 1,100. If we could see 5 to 8 percent gains this is year, we'd be pretty happy. In fact, looking out longer term, 2,3,5 years, we think it is that kind of environment. It's a little bit reminiscent of 1992, '94, where we had a lot of things going on both globally, and we had a lot of changes in interest rates at the time, so a little bit of similarity.

DOBBS: Five to 8 percent for this year; your judgment in terms of what sectors investors, you're advising should be in?

WOLFE: Still a little bit on the defensive side, focusing on health care and consumer staples, and also looking at opportunities in technology. I mentioned we don't hate all of them. Companies like Intuit (Company: Intuit Inc.; Ticker:

INTU; URL: <http://www.intuit.com/>) and Linear Technology (Company: Linear
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Technology Corporation ; Ticker: LLTC ; URL: <http://www.linear-tech.com>) still
look attractive to us; proprietary pricing and very high gross margins are the
reasons why.

DOBBS: High gross margins and you're expecting profits this year of what?

WOLFE: For Linear Technologies I think we're looking slightly better than
consensus estimates. Nonetheless, we are looking at growth prospects in 2003. I
do have to admit that we are betting a little bit on 2003 here.

DOBBS: There you go, influencing those expectations again.

WOLFE: That's right, but they look reasonable to us given their proprietary
pricing models.

DOBBS: Chris we appreciate you being here. Thanks a lot. Chris Wolfe.
Coming up next, the first section of that space railroad is completed on the
international space station. We'll have details of the first test run in space.
We'd love to look at these pictures, we know you do as well. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DOBBS: "CROSSFIRE" begins in just a few minutes. Paul Begala and Tucker
Carlson to tell us all about it, gentlemen.

PAUL BEGALA, CO-HOST, "CROSSFIRE": Lou, we are going to of course we're going
to talk about the Middle East first. Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania will
be here as well as **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, who's the representative of the Palestine
Liberation Organization here in Washington. So we've had these guests on before,
and sometimes sparks fly.

TUCKER CARLSON, CO-HOST, "CROSSFIRE": Yes, Lou, and you may not know this,
but today is tax day. Don't know how many taxes you paid. We paid too many, and
so we're going to have two members of Congress on to account for themselves. Why
we pay so much in taxes, what do you do with the money? Can you lower them, are
among the questions we will be asking.

DOBBS: I would be glad to give even more if they would just explain what they
have done with them.

CARLSON: Lou, you are welcome any time you want on "CROSSFIRE" to pose that
question.

DOBBS: We look forward to it, Gentlemen. Thank you very much, Paul Begala,
Tucker Carlson. Coming right up, the first space railcar hit a bump during its
maiden trip along the International Space Station today. The railcar stopped
about halfway along its 32-foot track, then after a computer shut it down. After
several hours scientists were able to get it moving again. The trolley moves at
a top speed of five feet per minute. It costs more than \$190 million to build,
and it will eventually be used to move a giant robotic arm around the space
station. The mission continues to go well.

Millions of Americans are hoping they will be the lucky winner of the second
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largest Big Game jackpot in history. Tomorrow's drawing jumped to \$325 million
after Friday's \$220 million drawing failed to produce a winner.

Participating states, in case you would like to mark this on your programs;
Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Maryland, New Jersey and Virginia.
You have until 10:45 Eastern tomorrow evening to purchase those tickets. The
odds of hitting all six numbers, we should point are, are somewhat slim: 76
million to 1.

Coming up next here, we will have the Dobbs Report. I will have a few
thoughts on executive compensation. Also: "In Their Words," including the views

from both sides of the Middle East conflict. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DOBBS: Tonight I've got a few thoughts on executive compensation I hope you'll consider, and a few thoughts about the rather timid mood in corporate America for reform. Last week on this broadcast, the New York Stocks Exchange chairman Dick Grasso was here to talk about a new committee that has been formed at the exchange to start reforming the way Wall Street does business, at least to take a look at it.

On Capitol Hill there's talk of reforming everything from accounting to stock options, 401(k)s to corporate governance, market oversight and regulation as well. And guess what, it all needs fixing. But it's more than just a little scary that reform will emanate only from Congress or at least the majority of it from Congress.

Business also needs to be dealing with all of these issues and sooner rather than later. And I believe one of the first areas that should be looked at and fixed is executive compensation in this country. I'd like to show you a chart here of the top five at least as laid out by "Business Week." These are winners. "Business Week" says they're winners, not just in total compensation, though they did very well, but because their pay went up less than the return to their shareholders last year.

Now don't you feel better knowing that? But these are not just CEOs we are talking about here, they are also leaders. Of course those five people made over \$800 million, but don't you think they look more than just a little greedy for people we call leaders? Now the '90s were great for just about everybody. Corporate profits rose 108 percent, CEO pay however, rose 443 percent. Now that's really great.

Last year was tough. As you know some firms had to lay off a thousand or more people, but guess what, the CEOs of those companies earned 80 percent more than the CEOs of the best performing companies. Overall CEO pay is now 500 times that of the average employee he or she manages. Now that's a lot of talent. Do you think it's about time to think about business performing business? Or do you believe that all of this just makes a great deal of sense? Those are my words, and now "In Their Words."

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SHARON: All together we are on our way out, and that's what is happening,
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that's exactly what I have said when I was asked in the past, I said whenever we have accomplished, we're leaving.

BLITZER: Excuse me, maybe I'm misunderstanding, but I may still be confused. You say within a week you will be out of all of these areas, with the exception of Bethlehem unless there's a resolution of that issue?

SHARON: And Ramallah.

BLITZER: And Ramallah. You won't be out within a week of Ramallah?

SHARON: Unless we're able -- those terrorists will be handed over to us, we'll leave there.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ERAKAT: This man says he's committed to peace. What peace, when you build 35 settlements in one year? What peace when you confiscate Palestinian lands? He denies the occupation. He denies Palestinian's cry for freedom. He never mentioned the words that "I will pull out."

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

CHARLES ROSSOTTI, IRS COMMISSIONER: It's not acceptable for the government agency that effects more Americans than any other agency to also be rated the lowest. Changing that was a mandate incorporated in the restructuring act, and we are beginning, and I do stress, beginning, to deliver on the mandate of changing that. While the trend is good, as you've noted, a lot more needs to be done.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I'm like everybody else. Do you guys wait until the last minute? I hate giving away my money.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

DOBBS: Happy tax day. That's MONEYLINE for this Monday evening. Thanks for being with us. Good night from New York. "CROSSFIRE" is coming up next.

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LOAD-DATE: July 9, 2003

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Fox News Network

SHOW: FOX ON THE RECORD WITH GRETA VAN SUSTEREN (22:21)

April 15, 2002 Monday

Transcript # 041503cb.260

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 1163 words

HEADLINE: Interview With **Hasan Abdel Rahman**

GUESTS: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**

BYLINE: Greta Van Susteren

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

VAN SUSTEREN: You heard the Israeli position on the Mideast turmoil, now for the Palestinian position. With me in Washington to respond is **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, chief Palestinian representative to the U.S. and PLO spokesman. Welcome.

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO THE U.S.: Thank you.

VAN SUSTEREN: Hasan, you just heard me ask the deputy prime minister Sharansky about Jenin and whether or not there was a massacre there in that refugee camp. Israelis say 100 terrorists were killed, and I've seen numbers from Palestinians saying as many as 500 women and children. Who is lying?

RAHMAN: Definitely, it is the Israelis who are lying.

VAN SUSTEREN: How do we know that? How do you prove that?

RAHMAN: Well, first of all, today there was a group of the Red Cross who was allowed into one street only, and they found 20 bodies of men and women and

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children, in one street. And they prevented them from going into any other street.

VAN SUSTEREN: How were they killed?

RAHMAN: They were shot, shot dead by the...

VAN SUSTEREN: Has the Red Cross seen this?

RAHMAN: Yes. Absolutely. It was the Red Cross. And 20 of them, the Ministry of Health was notified that we have 800 people missing. I'm not saying that all of them were killed. There were homes, Greta, that were demolished over their inhabitants.

VAN SUSTEREN: Were they being used as human shields, as -- the Israelis claim that some of these people were used as...

RAHMAN: Absolutely not. Those are your families. You don't use your children as -- this is...

VAN SUSTEREN: Wait a second. Let me back up...

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: Greta, let me just explain one thing. This is a city, this is a town where people lived with their families, with their children. They are invaded by an army. They are not sitting in a barracks. They are in their homes. That's why most of those people were killed inside their homes. They were not fighting in the streets and then they took people hostages.

VAN SUSTEREN: Well, are you saying that there weren't any people firing on the Israeli army?

RAHMAN: Of course there were! Of course there were. You have a police force there. You have a few fighters, few men, militias, civilians who have guns. When you are invaded in your home, even in Washington, there are -- every home must have a gun or two guns. Then when you are invaded by a foreign army, what do you do? Don't you defend yourself?

VAN SUSTEREN: All right, let me ask you about Mrs. Arafat, Arafat's wife, who has endorsed the concept of suicide bombings. She said that if she had a son that she would be -- that apparently, she'd be proud to have her son as being a suicide bomber. Your thought on that?

RAHMAN: Well, first of all, I didn't see what was published. I have not seen...

VAN SUSTEREN: All right, well, take it as gospel that...

RAHMAN: Well, let me say...

VAN SUSTEREN: I've read this. OK.

RAHMAN: OK, let me say that's her opinion. It's not the opinion -- it's not
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my opinion. It's not the opinion of the Palestinian Authority, either. Yasser Arafat said yesterday in a statement in his name and in the name of the Palestinian Authority that we are opposed to any action against civilians, whether it is by individual terrorists or by state terrorists like the state of Israel, when they kill Palestinians...

VAN SUSTEREN: Then explain Marwan -- then explain Marwan Barghouti, who is the man who was arrested today by the Israelis. And apparently there are documents tying him to payments to terrorists, and also financial documents tying him to Mr. Arafat.

RAHMAN: You know, I'm going to say something that you may not like, Greta.

VAN SUSTEREN: OK.

RAHMAN: The problem is that what the Israelis say is taken uncritically. First of all, this is a man who is a member of the Palestinian parliament. He is a leader in al-Fatah movement, which is the Palestinian official party. He was a

negotiator with the Israelis. He sees that his country is under military occupation. He has the God-given right to defend his country.

VAN SUSTEREN: Does he have the God-given right, though, to pay terrorists, people to commit...

RAHMAN: Who -- who says...

VAN SUSTEREN: I'm asking you to...

RAHMAN: Who decides that, whether they are terrorists or not? He did not pay anything -- listen...

VAN SUSTEREN: Did he participate in any way with the suicide bombers?

RAHMAN: No, absolutely not!

VAN SUSTEREN: Encourage...

RAHMAN: Absolutely not.

VAN SUSTEREN: Encourage the (UNINTELLIGIBLE) --

RAHMAN: This is what the Israelis are saying, and the Israelis are lying! You remember that the French lied about the Algerian resistance. The white South Africans lied about the African resistance. The British lied about American resistance. When you have a colonial power, they always -- in order to delegitimize you, suddenly you are accused of being a terrorist.

VAN SUSTEREN: But Hasan, how do we decide -- American people listening to us talking, listening to me talk to the deputy prime minister -- how do we decide who's telling the truth in this?

RAHMAN: Well, this is -- this is a deputy prime minister who arrived into Palestinian, Israel, 10 years ago from the Soviet Union. And he is deciding the future of Palestinians who have been there 800 years. Can you believe that? Just

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because he happens to be Jewish, he has the right to arrive there and decide the destiny of Palestinian families who have been living on that land since time immemorial.

VAN SUSTEREN: All right, in the minute that we have left, what is going to happen here? How in the world is this going to be solved? How is there going to be peace...

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: One single solution.

VAN SUSTEREN: Which is?

RAHMAN: To end this illegal, obnoxious, immoral colonialism occupation of Israel.

VAN SUSTEREN: Does that include a ceasefire by Arafat?

RAHMAN: It includes peace agreements. You get the Israelis out of the West Bank and Gaza, and you will have a peace agreement.

VAN SUSTEREN: And if they won't withdraw to 1967 borders, does that mean it won't happen?

RAHMAN: Definitely not because if the -- what do they want? They want to steal land from the Palestinians? Are they allowed to? Is anybody in the world allowed to take anybody else's land?

VAN SUSTEREN: And that, of course, will be the -- I mean, there'll be no resolution till the two of you can see eye to eye on this -- .

RAHMAN: No, because they are -- Greta, they are imposing their will on the Palestinians by military force. They do not have the right to do so, no legal authority, no legality for that, and...

VAN SUSTEREN: Hasan...

RAHMAN: ... cannot do it.

VAN SUSTEREN: ... I got to stop you there. Thanks for joining us.

RAHMAN: You're welcome.

VAN SUSTEREN: Up next: How hard is it to prosecute a priest for sex crimes? And should church leaders who cover up for accused priests face criminal charges?

And later...

LOAD-DATE: July 10, 2003

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NBC News Transcripts

SHOW: Today (7:00 AM ET) - NBC

April 15, 2002 Monday

LENGTH: 780 words

HEADLINE: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Palestinian representative to US, discusses Powell's meeting with Yasser Arafat

ANCHORS: MATT LAUER; KATIE COURIC

BODY:

MATT LAUER, co-host:

On CLOSE UP this morning, the path to peace. As we've noted, Secretary of State Colin Powell has described his meeting on Sunday with Yasser Arafat as 'useful and constructive.' Today Mr. Powell meets with leaders of Lebanon and Syria.

Hasan Abdel Rahman is the chief Palestinian representative to the United States.

Mr. Rahman, good morning to you.

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (Chief Palestinian Representative to the US): Good morning, Matt.

LAUER: It--it appears we have a standoff, even after meetings over the last several days. In your opinion, what is the best thing to come out of the meeting between Secretary Powell and President Arafat?

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, as the--as the secretary said, the meeting was useful and constructive and frank and candid. There was expression of views by both sides. You know, the problem with this meeting, that the secretary came to the meeting empty-handed. In other words, he did not come with a timetable from Mr. Sharon on how to implement resolution of the Security Council of the United Nations, 1402, which demands from Israel to hold its invasion of the Palestinian territories and withdraw its tanks.

LAUER: Well, here's the big--big basic problem is, Israel says they won't withdraw the troops from the West Bank and stop the military operation until the violence, in particular the suicide bombings, end. Yasser Arafat says the violence won't end until the tanks pull out. So how do you solve that?

Mr. RAHMAN: But there's a sequence that was established in the Security Council resolution. Hold the invasion, withdraw the tanks from the cities that were occupied--and this, by the way, is the position that was expressed by the President of the United States. Remember two weeks ago, he said to Israel,

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'Hold the invasion, withdraw your tanks now, and then we will discuss the issues.' Because today you have 3.2 million Palestinians who are living under siege. You cannot go out to buy milk for your children. You cannot buy food for your children. How can you combat violence if your national infrastructure is destroyed, your roads are destroyed, your telephone system...

LAUER: Right.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...and then your--also your police is being destroyed.

LAUER: Let me ask you a personal question, Mr. Rahman...

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes.

LAUER: Do you personally feel that suicide bombings or homicide bombings, as they're being called now, are a viable tool to be used by the Palestinians in this conflict?

Mr. RAHMAN: I am opposed to violence, to--to suicide bombing on more than one ground. I'm opposed to it morally. I'm opposed to it politically. I am opposed to it because it targets civilians. I'm opposed to it because of what it does to our society...

LAUER: In a recent...

Mr. RAHMAN: ...but that does not, if you allow me, that does not explain it. What explains suicide bombing is the desperation that is created by Israel in the Palestinian society.

LAUER: And that's the point I want to make, because in a recent interview published, Mrs. Arafat, Yasser Arafat's wife, said that in--in some ways she thinks the bombings are a legitimate resistance against Israeli occupation. She said if she had a son, there would be no greater honor than to sacrifice him for the Palestinian cause. What's your reaction to that?

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, I did not read the--the quote, and I'm not going to comment on something that I have not seen or have not heard. That's not really proper for me. But I express my views, and I believe that this is the views of many Palestinians. But we have to look at how Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories over 36 years turned many Palestinians into violence. You know, I blame the Israelis for creating a culture of violence in a society that was not violent. Occupation is--is a system of terror...

LAUER: In--in...

Mr. RAHMAN: ...because it deprives Palestinians of their very basic freedoms and very basic dignity. It humiliates them. It...

LAUER: In just 10 seconds left, if I can...

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes.

LAUER: Prime Minister Sharon has called for some kind of a summit meeting similar to the Madrid summit back in the early '90s. Do you think that would

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work? Briefly, if you will.

Mr. RAHMAN: That's a gimmick because he is saying he's trying to escape forward. There's a situation on the ground today; Mr. Sharon has to deal with it. He has to withdraw his troops, so we can start the political process.

LAUER: **Hasan Abdel Rahman.** Mr. Rahman, thank you very much.

Mr. RAHMAN: Thank you, sir.

LAUER: It's 12 past the hour. Here's Katie.

KATIE COURIC, co-host:

Matt, thank you.

LOAD-DATE: April 15, 2002

SHOW: CNN LARRY KING WEEKEND 21:00

April 14, 2002 Sunday

Transcript # 041400CN.V42

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 7336 words

HEADLINE: Is Middle East Peace Possible?

GUESTS: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, George Mitchell, Alon Pinkas, Bob Schieffer

BYLINE: Larry King

HIGHLIGHT:

Panel discusses crisis in the Middle East.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LARRY KING, HOST: Tonight, Colin Powell meets with Yasser Arafat and Ariel Sharon, separate talks, so far no solutions. With each side saying the other is in the wrong, is Mideast peace possible?

Joining us: Ambassador Alon Pinkas, the Israeli consul general in New York;

Hasan Abdel Rahman, the chief Palestinian representative in the United States; former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, architect of a plan for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and my man, Bob Schieffer, narrator of "Face the Nation" and CBS News chief Washington correspondent. They're all next on a live edition of LARRY KING WEEKEND.

Usually, our Saturday and Sunday shows are pre-taped. Tonight, we are live for obvious reasons. We have an outstanding panel, and I might add that Bob Schieffer will not only be asked questions, but he can participate with questions if he wishes as well, and I'll start with Senator Mitchell, OK.

Colin Powell meets with both men today. He's going to other areas tomorrow.

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Your plan is front and center from the Bush administration. Where are we, George?

GEORGE MITCHELL, FORMER SENATE MAJORITY LEADER: Well, let's hope we're in the beginning of a process that will produce implementation of first a cease-fire and then prompt movement into further steps and negotiations. It's obviously impossible to know, at least I don't know, what was said behind the closed doors at the meetings with Arafat and Sharon, but I think the secretary deserves a lot of credit for making what is a very, very determined effort in an extremely difficult situation.

KING: Anything you see today, senator, that makes you optimistic?

MITCHELL: Well, just the fact that they're still going, the fact that it hasn't ended. There was obviously a process of discussion between Powell and Arafat and their aides over the statement by Arafat. Secretary Powell deemed that sufficient to justify the meeting which followed, so the mere fact that the process is ongoing.

Larry, I recall in Northern Ireland, we went for two years and we had many, many days when it looked like it was over and we regarded it as a great success just to be still in talks, still keep going. I think that's what's needed now, patience and perseverance.

KING: Bob Schieffer, we've had no homicide bombings in the past two days.

Are you encouraged by that and generally encouraged by today's events?

BOB SCHIEFFER, CBS "FACE THE NATION": Well, I would generally agree with what Senator Mitchell just said. It seems to me that at least things went well enough today that they have decided to have the staff members meet tomorrow and talk some more.

You know, the old thing about every journey begins with one small step, perhaps every negotiation begins with at least a few words, and I think that's what we saw happen today. I mean, this thing has gone to the point where the United States may be the only power left. Somebody said the other day, we're not just a super power, we're a super duper power now.

And now that Colin Powell is deeply involved, I think it's the right way to go. This has gotten to the point, it is so serious that the United States I think, Larry, has to risk failure to try to get the two sides to separate and at least start talking. Maybe the talking started today. We'll see what comes after it.

KING: Hasan Rahman, the chief Palestinian representative, have you spoken with Mr. Arafat or anyone close to him today?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: No, I spoke to members of our delegation who participated in the discussions.

KING: And what did they tell you?

RAHMAN: They were very pleased with the discussion that took place, the candid, frank, touched on all the issues. But unfortunately, Secretary Powell
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came to the meeting empty-handed. He did not come up with the timetable for Israel withdrawal. On the contrary, while he was sitting with President Arafat in the meeting, Sharon was ordering his troops to move into more cities and towns.

This does not reflect very well on the credibility of the United States, because after all, it is the United States who is going to deliver. After two weeks since the day that the United States proposed in the Security Council for Resolution 1402 and the president said, "I call on Sharon to heed my demand that he hold the invasion and withdraw his troops," Sharon is still continuing the invasion.

KING: So are you saying, Mr. Rahman, that nothing fruitful happened in the meeting with Arafat today?

RAHMAN: No. There was many things fruitful as far as our readiness to work with Mr. Colin Powell to make the process move forward. But he did not bring a commitment from Israel to implement the resolution of the Security Council.

KING: Ambassador Pinkas, have you spoken with either Prime Minister Sharon or anyone who was present at the meetings between Sharon and Powell?

AMBASSADOR ALON PINKAS, ISRAELI COUNSEL GENERAL: Yes I have, Larry.

KING: And what can you tell us?

PINKAS: Well, my understanding was that Mr. Sharon, Prime Minister Sharon was trying his best to facilitate a successful mission for Colin Powell, for Secretary Powell. I think they discussed several modalities for the upcoming days and weeks. They discussed both the military operation and the political process that hopefully will resume at some point after this operation is accomplished, or after it is completed.

And I think that, you know, from our point of view, Secretary Powell can not fail in this mission. I mean, I've heard many people assess his mission as either doomed to fail or impossible. That, I think, is very unhelpful. Any way you look at this mission, I think Secretary Powell's chances of success are larger than the possibility of failing.

KING: What do you make...

PINKAS: If he comes up...

KING: What do you make of Mr. Rahman's statement that Powell brought nothing to give from the Israeli side?

PINKAS: I think you have to ask Secretary Powell what it was that he was intending to bring, what it was that he expected?

KING: What President Bush had asked the Israelis to do.

PINKAS: President Bush asked us to withdraw immediately, which is something that we're doing in the context of the military operation in certain areas of the West Bank. I think that Secretary Powell is privy to information,

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irrefutable evidence of that showing direct link between Arafat and the mobsters around him to terror activity.

We found 20 missiles in a mosque. We found documents implicating Arafat and

some of his lieutenants in signing checks and ordering homicide bombings. Powell, of all people, a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, understands the complexity of this, understands the military necessity to complete this. There won't be a political process, but you can not resume a viable and durable political process. Unless you dismantle this infrastructure, it's impossible.

KING: All right. Senator Mitchell, who gives first?

MITCHELL: Well, I think that what Secretary Powell is trying to do, of course, is create a situation where both parties move simultaneously back toward negotiation, and I hope that he's able to do that. It's obviously very difficult because there is, as everyone knows, total mistrust, disbelief of what the other side says, and so it's a hard thing to do, but I think he's in the process of trying to organize that now, simultaneous action.

KING: When you're sitting as you have between two people that distrust each other, as you did in many occasions in your life, both of less importance maybe in the U.S. Senate, and of major importance in Ireland and Britain, what does the middle person do when the two sides don't trust each other?

MITCHELL: Tries to create a framework or a climate within which they can at least have a discussion of the issues, can state their views fully and frankly, and hopefully attempt to recognize that they have a common interest. In this case, while it's obviously hard to see through all of the terrible death and destruction that's occurred in recent weeks, the two sides have a common interest.

Life has become unbearable for Israeli citizens, and life is unbearable for the Palestinians. They have a common interest in ending that and getting back to some semblance of a normal life, and I think they have to try in that position to drive that home that there's a lot that divides you. You don't like each other, but you got to work together to get that common end.

KING: I'll take a break and come back. We'll ask if it would be much better for the interlocker if the parties were together with him, and then we'll ask Bob Schieffer some and then Mr. Schieffer can chime in with questions of our three guests as well. You're watching a special live edition of LARRY KING WEEKEND. We'll be right back.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

COLIN POWELL, SECRETARY OF STATE: I've just completed a useful and constructive exchange with Chairman Arafat and the members of his staff, and we exchanged a variety of ideas and discussed steps on how we can move forward, and members of my staff will be meeting with member of his staff again.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

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KING: Senator Mitchell, rather than shuttle diplomacy, isn't the interlocker better off if both parties are with him?

MITCHELL: Not at this time, Larry. I think it would be a mistake to try to bring Prime Minister Sharon and Chairman Arafat together. I think meetings can occur between the two sides at a lesser level, staff level, perhaps some security cooperation, but that's a matter of timing and judgment.

I think right now a meeting would be counterproductive if it could occur at all, which I think frankly it could not at this moment. So I think it's a process by which you start at one level and you work your way up and you only bring the leaders together when I think there is some reasonable prospect of it being a productive meeting.

KING: Bob, last night on this program we repeated a program we did on our

10th anniversary in June of '95, which featured Yitzhak Rabin, Yasser Arafat, and King Hussein, all on together for the full hour. It was kind of historic. Peace seemed very close at hand, and we still don't have it. Why not?

SCHIEFFER: Well, if I knew the answer to that, Larry, I suppose we could resolve all of this tonight.

KING: Anoint you.

SCHIEFFER: But I think this is one of the great tragedies here, because think of the great advances that were made. We got to Camp David. Up until that time, Egypt was seen as a major threat to Israel. Jordan was seen as a threat. We signed the Camp David -- the Camp David accords were signed and then Egypt was no longer seen, it was sort of removed from the equation, and we moved on to something else. And now, you see everything kind of breaking down and everything could come apart as a result of this.

Let me just ask Mr. Rahman a question, Larry.

KING: Sure.

SCHIEFFER: He said that Colin Powell came armed with nothing, or came and offered nothing today. Now earlier today, Rich Armitage, who is Mr. Powell's deputy, said that one of the things that Colin Powell said when he talked to Mr. Arafat today was, he said he asked him to use his bully pulpit to condemn violence, and to speak out more strongly than he has in the past. Now we know he made a statement yesterday, but I would just like to ask him, is Mr. Arafat going to do that or what can we expect from him, Mr. Rahman?

RAHMAN: I don't think that Yasser Arafat has any problem in doing that, but the question is, how can Yasser Arafat address his people today, as we speak here, when you have over 1,000 Israeli tanks in the Palestinian territories? When you have over 50,000 Israeli soldiers moving in all cities and towns of the West Bank and Gaza?

When mothers can not buy children food, can not go to the street to buy milk for their children? When people can not bury their dead? When the whole infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian society has been

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vengefully destroyed?

I mean telephone calls, roads have been dug, water pipes have been destroyed, everything by Israel, and the Palestinians are subject to attack today as we speak here. What can Yasser Arafat tell his people?

That's why I thought that had Secretary Powell brought to Arafat today a commitment from Mr. Sharon to halt the invasion and a timetable for withdrawal of the Israeli troops, Yasser Arafat and the Palestinians were ready and continue to be ready to do their share of the...

KING: In view of that definitive statement, Ambassador Pinkas, why not do that?

PINKAS: Well, Yasser Arafat had seven years worth of a peace process.

KING: But that's history. Why not today do that?

PINKAS: Larry, I beg to differ. It's not history. It goes to the heart of the matter of a deficient and inadequate leader that can not stand up and denounce and renounce and condemn violence. His credibility is no longer questioned. I think we've resolved about his credibility. It's non-existent.

Now, you want me to answer about today and tomorrow. It's very simple. We don't trust Yasser Arafat to deliver on his promise. We have signed...

KING: What's the point then of Powell doing -- of Mr. Powell doing anything? If you don't trust and he don't trust you and you don't trust him, all this is moot, right?

PINKAS: Well, not necessarily, because there are other people and there are

mechanisms that could still be resurrected or reinstated or reestablished that could insure a cease-fire. Now, Yasser Arafat had time before this invasion to stand up and condemn violence, to make that speech in Arabic, not in English, dispense with the bilingualism, stand up and say, "I will not tolerate suicide bombers."

KING: He said that yesterday.

PINKAS: No, he did not. He said something some differently, although that statement that he said was good that he made it. But it took him seven years to make that statement. What stops him from looking up to Mr. Sadat, the President of Egypt and standing up and saying something very simple, "no more war, no more bloodshed." He's never said that, never ever.

KING: Senator Mitchell.

RAHMAN: Can I say something?

KING: Quickly, Mr. Rahman, yes.

RAHMAN: First of all, obviously Mr. Pinkas does not take yes for an answer, and he continues to engage in name calling, which I try to avoid tonight. I have so many names to describe Mr. Sharon and the Israeli government, starting

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from (UNINTELLIGIBLE), continuing into everything war crimes that...

KING: But you're not going to do that, so all right.

RAHMAN: But I'm not going to do that because I am looking forward.

PINKAS: Very considerate of you.

RAHMAN: We want to get tonight if we can to something constructive, something positive, because we want Mr. Colin Powell to succeed for the sake of our people and for the sake of the Israeli people and for the sake of our region.

KING: All right. Let me get a break. We'll come right back with more of George Mitchell, Bob Schieffer, Chief Palestinian Representative Rahman, and Israeli Counsel General Pinkas on this special live edition of LARRY KING WEEKEND. Also, going to go to your calls momentarily. Don't go away.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SAEB ERAKAT, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: I think the discussions were constructive and that we dealt with all kinds of issues and we fully committed to implementation of Resolution 1402 that calls for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Senator Mitchell, what's the purpose of the Powell trips to other places, Syria and Lebanon?

MITCHELL: Well, obviously to tell them that the United States views with great concern the possible escalation on the northern border of Israel, and the potential that that has in combination with the ongoing conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians to trigger a much wider conflict, and I think it's appropriate that he does so and I hope very much that his words are heeded.

KING: If Ambassador Pinkas and Representative Rahman are examples of let's say Sharon and Arafat, as well they are, wouldn't you say, George, that this is one heck of a task?

MITCHELL: Well, it's obviously one heck of a task, Larry, but there is no such thing as a conflict that can't be ended, and I repeat what I said before, the result of this has been devastating to both societies.

Several months ago on my last visit, both Sharon and Arafat separately said to me, life has become unbearable for our people. This must end. And if there's one thing I know about the two of them, they don't coordinate their messages, so they were two completely separate expressions of precisely the same point of

view, and I think both recognize and accept that there is no military solution to this conflict. There has to be a negotiation at some point.

KING: Bob Schieffer, does it seem to you as a terrific journalist, that if both sides are at the end of their rope and both sides say we can't continue, Page 377

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one of them has to make some sort of statesman-like move?

SCHIEFFER: Well, somebody's going to have to do something because that's what's so different this time around. Always before, the Middle East flares up and then somebody has a truce and somebody works on a plan. This time, it seems impossible to just get the shooting stopped.

I asked Mr. Rahman a question. I'd like to ask Ambassador Pinkas a question, and that would be, what could the Israelis do at this point as some sort of sign of confidence? You say -- do I understand you correctly that you believe it is impossible now to deal with Mr. Arafat, and if you can't do that, then what do you do? Who do you negotiate with? That's the part that's very difficult for me to understand.

PINKAS: Well, it's -- well truthfully, Bob, it's something that we find difficult to understand because it's a vexing dilemma that we face every day, ever since Camp David.

Basically at Camp David, we gave up on Mr. Arafat as a political partner because the offer that was put on the table by then President Bill Clinton and then Prime Minister of Israel Barak, was basically 96 percent of the contiguous piece of land with some presence in Jerusalem, with a fair and equitable solution to the issue of Palestinian refugees.

They could come and live in the Palestinian state, with settlement blocks and borders and international recognition with the international community investing billions of dollars in creating an educational system and infrastructure, all those things that the Palestinian Authority neglected to deal with and rather used the money to arm itself or for corrupt causes.

Now, what needs to be done from now on is exactly the problem that we're facing. We want to reach a cease-fire, after which we want to resume political negotiations. However, nothing of value, nothing of lasting and durable value can be achieved with Mr. Arafat. We're trying to make that clear to everyone.

If Secretary Powell still has faith that something can be achieved with Arafat, then by all means try and you know what? I'll be pleasantly surprised if he emerges and says we can cut a deal with Arafat. Somehow, I doubt that.

Having said that, Bob, I agree with what you said before. I agree with what Senator Mitchell said. There won't be a military solution. It has to be political. It's going to probably be along the lines of what has been discussed, what had been discussed at Camp David a mere year and a half ago.

In order to reach that point, we have the Mitchell Plan. We have its introduction, the George Tenet Plan, and we will do that. The demographics, the geography makes it imperative for us to reach that solution.

KING: Mr. Rahman, we have George Mitchell right here. Does Arafat like the Mitchell Plan?

RAHMAN: We endorsed it and we accept it and we are willing to implement it, but let me say something about, I hope once and for all responding to Mr. Pinkas' distortions of the facts about Camp David.

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In Camp David what was offered to the Palestinians was not 97 percent you know that. What was offered, 97 percent was Clinton's proposal, which was in December but not in July during the Camp David. In Camp David, there were four

issues that we disagreed on.

One is the territory, Jerusalem, the refugees and the settlements and the boundaries, in fact five. We left Camp David and we continued negotiations, Mr. Pinkas. I myself participated at least in five rounds of negotiations here in Washington between the Israelis and the Palestinians. We did not stop negotiations in Camp David.

In fact, the negotiations continued until January 26th and there was a joint statement issued between the Israeli delegation and the Palestinian delegation. (UNINTELLIGIBLE) and (UNINTELLIGIBLE), in which they said that the achieved progress in (UNINTELLIGIBLE), and they would return to the negotiations after the Israel elections.

When Mr. Sharon was elected, he did not want to come back to the negotiating table. So why do you continue to distort the fact, Mr. Pinkas? I hope that one day on this television or on this network, you will tell the truth even once. So please, let's leave this behind this. We are ready to continue the negotiations with Israel from (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

KING: All right, now he is saying that, Ambassador Pinkas. Do you also accept the Mitchell Plan?

PINKAS: Of course we accept the Mitchell Plan.

KING: All right, you both accept it. Why isn't it in fact, and George Bush supports it, why isn't it operative?

PINKAS: Because there's one impediment to the Mitchell Plan, to the implementation of the Mitchell Plan and that impediment is called Yasser Arafat. Now, I really don't want to ...

KING: A person affects a plan?

PINKAS: A person affects a plan. When a person is a leader, when a person is a dictator who's not exactly up for reelection, when a person makes Tony Soprano look like Mother Teresa, if you look at what we found in the last three weeks, then you know that that person is a serious impediment to any implementation of a serious plan like the Mitchell Plan is.

KING: All right. Hold on. Senator Mitchell, what do you make of that?

MITCHELL: Well, Larry, I'm flattered that everybody liked my plan -

KING: Maybe Bob Schieffer likes it too.

MITCHELL: But I'm disheartened of course that no action has been taken toward it. It does though raise the question of implementation of the very first step, which is the cessation of violence and a series of steps to enable them to get into negotiation. That's the difficult part.

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When I went there, Larry, quite a while ago now, I was of the view that the most difficult issues to resolve would be those, which Mr. Alon and the Palestinian Ambassador have just mentioned, refugees, Jerusalem, settlements, land. I'm now of the view that those can be resolved, but the most difficult step is the first one, getting an end to violence in this atmosphere of violence, emotion, deep mistrust, which you heard expressed here this evening by the two representatives.

KING: All right. Let me get a break. When we come back, we'll take phone calls. I'm going to ask Bob Schieffer, is this more a personal thing between two men. This is LARRY KING WEEKEND, a live version of LARRY KING WEEKEND, more on the Middle East tomorrow night, by the way. We'll be right back.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SHIMON PERES, ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER: When it comes to Arafat, I'm really trying to see or think who should in the eyes of the other people replace him? Maybe there are other candidates to succeed him, but I don't think they will be

better or more promising. We can not force the Palestinians to change their leaders, but we have to press upon the Palestinians to change their policies.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Welcome back to a live edition of LARRY KING WEEKEND. We certainly thank our guests for coming in on Sunday evening. They are in New York.

Ambassador Alon Pinkas, the Israeli Counsel General to the United States; in D.C. is **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the Chief Palestinian Representative to the United States; in New York is George Mitchell, former Senate Majority Leader, chairman of Sharm al Sheik fact finding committee, who gave President Bush recommendations for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and he was the former peace negotiator in Northern Ireland; and also in Washington, Bob Schieffer, anchor and moderator of "Face the Nation with Bob Schieffer" and CBS News Chief Washington Correspondent.

Before we take some calls, Bob, do you think this is Arafat versus Sharon?

SCHIEFFER: Well, I think that's a part of it. I mean anybody who's covered politics as I have knows that they are sometimes friendly. Enemies, people like Everett Dirksen and Lyndon Johnson would go at each other out on the Senate floor and then they'd have a drink in the evening. There are also people who don't like each other. Bobby Kennedy and Eugene McCarthy for example, Trent Lott and John McCain for example.

So it goes back and forth, but these two men have been very involved in the politics of their countries for a long, long time and my guess is that this goes beyond the personal dislike, which I'm sure they have for each other. My guess is that both believes that he is doing what's in the best interest of those he represents, but I don't think there's any question, personalities do play a part in these things.

KING: Tampa, Florida as we go to calls. Hello.

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CALLER: Yes, Larry, my question for you panel is, if a Middle East peace plan is worked out, do they feel the United States will have to put together a coalition in order to maintain that plan and keep the peace?

KING: Mr. Rahman, do you think the United States will have to be there?

RAHMAN: I believe the United States can play a very, very important role. I think the outline is...

KING: The question is, if they work something out, do you think the United States would have to be involved, say on the site?

RAHMAN: I think the involvement of the United States on the site would be very, very helpful because obviously the two parties trust the United States and they want the United States to be involved. Now in order to get there, this is the issue.

As Senator Mitchell said, the first step, the first step is leading, for the Palestinians to see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel, that there will be an end of their tragic life and Israel's occupation for 35 years. Is it going to come to an end or not? That is the question that every Palestinian asks. Give me -- tell me that it is going to happen within one year, and I will work with you.

But don't tell me I will engage you in a process that will get you in a tunnel and at the end of the first tunnel, you find another tunnel. That is not going to work with the Palestinians. We feel that 35 years of foreign, illegal occupation is more than enough. We need our God given right to live as a free people in our own state, next to Israel, on the West Bank and Gaza. We don't ask for one inch beyond the West Bank and Gaza, the 1967 boundaries.

KING: There was occupation before the 35 years too, wasn't there Mr. Rahman?

RAHMAN: No, there was not.

KING: There was not, OK.

RAHMAN: I mean I don't consider Egypt administration, because Egypt did not build Egyptian settlements in the Palestinian territories and Jordan did not bring Jordanian ...

KING: But they occupied it?

RAHMAN: They were administering it. Israel -- the problem here is that Israel brought 300,000 Jews in the West Bank only since the Sharon election. We have 34 Jewish settlements. That's why I asked Mr. Pinkas whether they'll really accept the Mitchell Plan, which calls for cessation of all settlement activities.

KING: Mr. Pinkas, would you accept American armed forces on the scene?

PINKAS: Well, I think that's something, that's a component that should be looked at at the end of the process. It can not be a substitute to bilateral negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. I think that the U.S.

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involvement here is critical.

I think that the U.S. is indeed, as Bob Schieffer said, a super duper power, and it's also an indispensable nation, and whatever other term you choose to brand it. I think it best, it would be best to leave that issue to the end of the process, rather than the beginning.

KING: Mr. Mitchell, is Mr. Rahman correct? Was it the settlements that increased and heightened this problem?

MITCHELL: Well, it's a part of the problem, Larry, of course. They've developed very rapidly over the past several decades, and it is highly -- it's a realistic and a highly emotional issue from the Palestinian standpoint, but it is not the only issue. There are several other issues.

I believe that if they can get to negotiations on the final status issues, they will resolve the issue of settlements. I think that the tougher issue will be the right of return, and how to deal with Jerusalem. I think they'll be able to resolve them all, painful as it will be, but getting to that point I think is the most difficult thing.

KING: Corvalis, Oregon, hello.

CALLER: Hello.

KING: Hi.

CALLER: My question is for Mr. Mitchell.

KING: Yes.

CALLER: First of all, I really like your peace agreement, and I'd like to find out, aren't you worried about the violence in the Middle East coming to America if we don't stop funding the Israel oppression of the Palestinian people?

MITCHELL: Well, of course, we've already had a lot of violence in America. We had 19 suicide bombers on September 11, killing nearly 3,000 Americans, and we had prior incidents as well.

I think we do have an interest in resolving the situation in the Middle East from our own perspective, and it includes the possibility of further attacks on the United States, but I don't think that's the only basis on which we should be involved, and I think we should be seeking a settlement, which gives the two parties what they want.

And that leads me to a point, Larry, that should be made. One of the problems with resolving this is that the objectives of the two parties are not identical. The Israelis have a state. They want security. Security is the

number one, two, three, four, five and so on down the line issue for the Israelis. The Palestinians don't have a state and they want one, and they want it be economically viable and geographically contiguous, and because ...

KING: And both are not accomplishable?

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MITCHELL: I believe they are accomplishable. I believe they are and the United States supports both aspirations. But bringing these two objectives, which are not identical, into alignment is extremely difficult, particularly in the atmosphere that exists now.

KING: Bob Schieffer, do you think the attack of September 11 heightened awareness so much that more Americans are now interested in this situation than may previously have been interested?

SCHIEFFER: Oh, I don't think there's any question of that, but I think the caller raises a very interesting point, Larry, and that is, we have to somehow find a way to remove terrorism as an option. If terrorism succeeds in the Middle East, then it's going to succeed everywhere and no one will be safe, and I think that is just an added reason for the United States to continue the push to try to find some kind of settlement.

George Mitchell is also absolutely right, I think, and that is the first step is going to be the hardest step, but we have to work toward a deal that is a good deal for both sides, because if it's not a good deal for both sides, it's not going to work.

You can't shove something down either side's throat, and make that the lasting agreement. It has to be something that both sides can live with. Both sides have to be secure.

KING: We'll take a break. We'll be back with more. More phone calls as well. Don't go away.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ERAKAT: President Arafat, with whatever limited means he has, is not going to only do his best to reign in people who are not part of his organization, but he would do everything possible to stop all violence, once a cease-fire is agreed, once the Israelis for once comply with what President Bush has been telling them. Get out now.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Another call for our panel, Montreal, hello.

CALLER: Hi, Larry. Mr. Rahman, why is it so difficult for Arafat to publicly denounce terrorism in Arabic on the air to his people?

RAHMAN: Well, he did that in fact yesterday. But he also delivered a speech in Arabic on December 16th to his people, in which he asked to stop any violence against civilians, and he extended a hand of peace to the Israelis. The other speech he made in Arabic, which was broadcast in all our television stations was on the 28th of March, about two weeks ago to the Arab Summit in Beirut. So Yasser Arafat is on record that he has condemned terrorism. He took action against terrorism, and he opposes terrorism. The question is the following, that today the Palestinian people are under military occupation.

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KING: All right, I don't want to be repetitive. Those points have been solidly made.

RAHMAN: No. No. What I'm saying that can Yasser Arafat, what can Yasser Arafat tell his people today if every one of them is under a state of siege.

KING: A state of siege. Ambassador Pinkas, Condoleezza Rice, the national

security adviser, said that humanitarian workers have to be allowed into the Jenin refugee camp. There's been back and forth over what happened there and what started it. Are you going to let them in?

PINKAS: Absolutely. What's been stopping them from getting in until now is the fact that the Palestinians booby-trapped many buildings, including buildings incidentally in which families, whole families, entire families were still in rooms.

They have booby-trapped the entrances to allies. They have booby-trapped garbage cans. They have booby-trapped an ambulance. So it's going to take -- it took us time before we could clear those buildings and those access roads, in order to allow for the humanitarian aid to pass.

KING: When will this happen?

PINKAS: I think that it already began, and I think that it will be increased in the upcoming days and weeks.

KING: Dallas, Texas, hello.

RAHMAN: Larry.

KING: I'll have you respond in a minute, Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

KING: Dallas, Texas, hello.

CALLER: Yes, how are you gentlemen.

KING: Hi.

CALLER: I have just to make, I just want to make a statement. Since I've been watching this, I have lost all respect for all of the news anchors in America, and I want to say to Mr...

KING: Go ahead, why? What's the point ma'am? Hold it. Where's the call? Why? Where did the call go? All right. Why did we drop that? Mr. Schieffer, there's been a lot of criticism of television news anchors in America. I guess she was leading to this, being partial in this. How do you respond?

SCHIEFFER: It's a very, very difficult issue and I have yet to be on a broadcast. I have yet to do a story about this that I did not get criticism. But I must say, I get just as much from one side as I do to the other in this, and I think it just underlines and illustrates what a difficult problem this is.

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This is an issue where people on both sides have, well to say strong views would be to put it mildly. This is just a tough one and it's why the situation is where it is, because people have very different views about it.

KING: Mr. Rahman, you want to respond to the statement about Jenin.

RAHMAN: Yes, absolutely. Absolutely. You know, I have heard liars in the past, but like Mr. Pinkas I have never seen, because he is accusing us of killing our own people for heaven's sake.

KING: Right, that's what he is.

PINKAS: Exactly, Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: Absolutely -- no. Mr. Pinkas, you...

PINKAS: Exactly, Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: You are an absolute liar, and I don't hesitate to tell you this on television, because you are telling...

PINKAS: Don't lose your temper because you're losing the war, Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: I'm not losing my temper. If you were like...

PINKAS: Mr. Rahman, for 70 years you're losing your temper.

RAHMAN: Let me finish. Let me finish.

PINKAS: Don't do it again, Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: Let me finish. I let you finish, even when you were cursing us.

RAHMAN: No, I was not cursing you.

RAHMAN: Let me finish.

KING: Are you denying that, Mr. Rahman?

RAHMAN: Let me finish.

KING: OK.

RAHMAN: Let me finish. If you were right, why didn't you let the media get in? Why did you -- I listened today to Jessie Caballe (ph) from the International Red Cross and she said what Israel committed is war crimes in the Palestinian refugee camp of Jenin, and Mr. Sharon (UNINTELLIGIBLE) and you, prime minister, have to be brought to justice as war criminals for the killing of Palestinian civilians. I tried to avoid dealing with this issue on this show tonight.

PINKAS: How nice of you.

RAHMAN: But you pushed me to tell you that you are a liar period.

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KING: Hold on, before we get into personalities. I want to ask George Mitchell and Bob Schieffer about Jenin as well. We're going to take a break.

We'll be right back. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Before we take another call, Senator Mitchell, what about this case that was just discussed by our two friends concerning Jenin?

MITCHELL: I don't know what happened there, Larry, and I think that you and I and Bob will probably have to await more information before making a judgment on it. I have no way of assessing the respective claims made. I'll just say the discussion points up the need to hold negotiations in private.

I know you and Bob are members of the news media and you look everything out in the open and I commend you for this kind of show, which gives people a chance to express their views directly to the public. But you have to conduct negotiations and meetings in private, so that you can get past this kind of exchange and get to really the issues that you're trying to reach in a negotiation.

KING: Bob, do you know more about it than Senator Mitchell?

SCHIEFFER: Well, I would -- Senator Mitchell may be surprised that I agree with him. I think there are certain negotiations that have to be conducted in public. The founding fathers did very well writing the Constitution in private. So some things are done, need to be done in private.

I would just say this about what's going on in Jenin. We don't know what's going on there and it would seem to me that it would be in the interest of both sides to have a third party, and that would be journalists, the media, to come in and take a look at what's going on.

It seems to me when reporters are allowed to come in and be on the scene, it adds credibility to whatever story that either side is trying to tell. Then the public, of course, will start jumping on us instead of jumping on them. But I think it would be a healthy thing if we were allowed in.

KING: Seattle, Washington, hello.

CALLER: Hi, why doesn't Secretary of State Colin Powell go to Jenin because he can actually see what's actually happening on the ground?

KING: Mr. Rahman?

RAHMAN: Well, we extend an invitation to Secretary Powell to go to Jenin if the Israelis, of course, allow him to because they have prevented everyone else from arriving into Jenin, everyone else. By the way, today there was an article by James Bennett (ph) in the "New York Times" describing what the destruction the Israelis done in Jenin, and he did not mention once the booby-traps that Mr. Pinkas is alleging that we have. He spent three hours in Jenin yesterday.

KING: There were, Ambassador Pinkas, though many demonstrations in Jenin, weren't there, anti-American, anti-Israeli demonstrations?

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PINKAS: Of course. You're looking at a city -- we're talking about a city, and incidentally not dissimilar from Arafat's compound, in which people were shooting in the air and joyously throwing candy at each other on 9/11. You're talking about a people who have established a political culture of murder and homicide bombings.

You're talking about a political culture that is so alien to the values that we share with the United States, democracy, freedom, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. Look at the -- did you ask yourself once why is there a refugee camp in the city of Jenin?

For God sakes, where is the Saudi money? Where's the money that was funneled into the Palestinian Authority since the Oslo process began? Why have these people not been built -- not been given better housing, medical care, supermarkets, Kindergartens, schools, basketball courts?

I'll tell you why, because the money was used to fund, to finance and to lubricate an entire, corrupt...

KING: Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: Yes, I want to...

KING: Want to respond to that? We're running short of time.

RAHMAN: Yes. Yes. First of all, you know, I would like to tell Mr. Pinkas in our region was introduced by the Israelis. Remember that your two prime ministers...

PINKAS: You're the only person who turns ignorance into a virtue, Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: Shamir and Menachem Begin were both on the most wanted list for terrorism.

PINKAS: I advised you on a previous show to read history.

RAHMAN: Let me -- you read history too. Those two people were indicted for terrorism, one for blowing up a hotel and the other for killing an international (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Second, you occupied the West Bank for 35 years. You did not allow the building of one single classroom, Mr. Pinkas. That's why we have said, those refugees they are in a camp because they were expelled from their villages and towns in Palestine where you brought instead of them immigrants from Brooklyn, New York, from Russia and from Argentina, and maybe yourself. I don't know where you were born?

KING: Where did the Saudi money go, though? Where did the Saudi money go?

RAHMAN: The Saudi money went into building in seven years with the admission of the International Monetary Fund, one of the most efficient educational systems in the Middle East. Listen, we, in spite of Israel...

KING: Senator Mitchell -- all right. Senator Mitchell, we will do a lot more

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on this. We're going to concentrate on it all week long. Senator Mitchell, do you see any light at the end of the tunnel? We're less than a minute.

MITCHELL: I do, Larry.

KING: You do?

MITCHELL: It's very dark now. It's very difficult, but they're going to eventually come back to the negotiating table, and I just hope it's before more people are needlessly killed.

KING: Bob, based on Ambassador Pinkas and Mr. Rahman, do you see any light?

SCHIEFFER: No, but I see some light in the fact that Secretary Powell did go

to the region today. The United States is involved. This is a step. It's a tiny step, but at least it's a step.

KING: Thank you all very much. Ambassador Alon Pinkas, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the chief Palestinian representative, Senator George Mitchell, the former Senate majority leader, and Bob Schieffer of CBS News.

Stay tuned now for LIVE FROM JERUSALEM with Bill Hemmer. He and Wolf Blitzer seem to be around the clock there. Wolf's going to have Prime Minister Sharon with him tomorrow on a special edition of "WOLF BLITZER REPORTS." And we'll see you tomorrow night covering more of the same. Good night. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM

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HIGHLIGHT:

Zalman Showal and Abdel Rahman discuss Colin Powell's meeting with Yasser Arafat.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

MILES O'BRIEN, CNN ANCHOR: We're getting reaction to Secretary of State Colin Powell's meeting today with Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat, obviously.

KYRA PHILLIPS, CNN ANCHOR: From the Israeli side, we have Zalman Showal, in Tel Aviv, he's Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Foreign Policy Adviser, and we have Hassan Abdel Rahman joining us again from Washington. He is Chief Palestinian representative to the U.S. Thank you both for being with us.

Overall reaction to Secretary Powell's meeting with Yasser Arafat. Mr. Shawal, why don't we start with you?

DALMIN SHOWAL, SHARON FOREIGN POLICY ADVISER: Yes, well, look we don't know the exact results yet because nothing officially, of course, has been announced. I think that when Secretary Powell will meet with Prime Minister Sharon, he will know more and we hopefully will also know more.

It has been a long-ish meeting, and what is on the table assuredly on the table is not just a cease-fire, although that's also very difficult to achieve, but both America and Israel want Arafat to make a definite commitment to end the wave of terror; to end this whole procedure of terror and violence.

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You know, just the other day, just on Friday, Yasser Arafat's own people -- a suicide bomber, or homicide bomber, as the White House now puts it -- exploded a bomb in a Jerusalem marketplace, killing 6 people including two Chinese foreign workers, wounding 65. So -- I -- one doesn't really know whether to weep or to laugh when Arafat says that he condemns terrorism when he sends his own people.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Showal. I'm sorry, Mr. Rahman, I apologize.

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REP. TO U.S.: You want me to respond?

O'BRIEN: We just want to get your initial reaction to the meeting...

RAHMAN: First of all, the meeting was a positive meeting. A useful meeting, as it has been described in the reports I have seen from our side -- people who participated in the meeting -- described the meeting as a good meeting. It's open, frank discussion between the two sides.

O'BRIEN: Do you have anything substantive that you can offer us?

RAHMAN: Well, let me say this: the onus today, to make things move, is leaving it on the Israeli side, to come up with a commitment for the implementation of resolutions of the Security Council 1402. Which, the President of the United States reiterated, and that is to cease, to hope the Israeli invasion of the Palestinian territories, and to withdraw Israel's troops. This is a commitment that was made by the Security Council; it's a commitment that was made by the President of the United States.

Israel defied, and continues to defy, the international whim and the whim of the President of the United States. Without a commitment from Israel to hold its invasion of the Palestinian territories, and would lower, in accordance with the Security Council resolution, it is very, very difficult to move forward on the other issues.

O'BRIEN: Well, I suppose the Israelis...

RAHMAN: But, the Palestinians...

O'BRIEN: I suppose the Israelis might say, without a commitment to stop the terrorism, the same thing is true.

RAHMAN: But, sir, there is a sequence here. And the sequence was voted on by the United States in the Security Council. It is difficult, if not impossible, when all of the Palestinian people are subjected to war crimes by the Israelis today, and I still believe that there is -- was -- a massacre committed by Israel in Jenin and in other areas, and that those practices of Israel are continuing. When you have all of your people under siege, deprived of their basic needs, you cannot expect the Palestinian people to -- because there's one side that is firing, and the other side is under fire. In this case, the Israelis are firing at the Palestinians. And therefore, Israel must institute (ph) the resolutions of the United Nations in order for us to move forward.

PHILLIPS: OK. Mr. Rahman, you bring up the issue now of war crimes. Let's move into the issue of the Israeli Supreme Court now, and if they -- it is being addressed, what happened in the Jenin refugee camp. Mr. Showal, let's talk about this. What do you hope to be accomplished, as the Israeli Supreme Court does address the situation of the refugee camp in Jenin, the burying of the dead, and what took place there, and the issue of was there or was there not a massacre?

SHOWAL: Obviously there was no massacre. Probably about 60-65 people were killed. The most of them five civilians, unfortunately a child, a woman...but all the rest were fighters, they were armed people. Which is also a tragedy. But this is part of the battle. We lost 23 soldiers in that very, very tough battle. The Palestinians wanted to make a propaganda issue out of it. Now the Supreme Court -- the Israeli Supreme Court -- has decided the bodies should be buried. But we have agreed that Red Cross, even Red Crescent -- I mean, the Muslim Red Cross organization, would be present, just to make it very clear there was no massacre. I'm sorry that Abdel Rahman, my friend, does not have this propaganda ploy any more. There was no -- absolutely no massacre -- it was a battle. In battle, people are being killed.

PHILLIPS: Well Mr. Showal, the question is raised though, why wasn't the Red Cross and the Red Crescent both allowed into the Jenin refugee camp? That stands as a fact.

Interview with Zalman Showal, Abdel Rahman CNN April 14, 2002 Sunday

SHOWAL: Well, they are going to be allowed into the camp now. We wanted, I mean, the army wanted to bury the people quicker. First of all, there was a danger of booby-traps, but the Supreme Court has stepped in. Which is another thing which the Palestinians should appreciate, that the Israeli Supreme Court is willing to listen to some of their complaints, and made a decision so nothing has happened for fear in between, but now that the bodies will be buried, all 60 of them, in the presence of Red Cross, in the presence of Red Crescent, as I said before, this should put an end, really, to this big lie which has been repeated time and time again about a massacre which didn't happen.

O'BRIEN: But Mr. Showal, the appearance here, at least, is that the Israelis have something to hide here. Would you concede that? It at least has the appearance of a cover-up.

SHOWAL: No, not at all. Not at all. We don't have anything to hide. We are defending ourselves. We are defending ourselves against, as President Bush said, not martyrs: murderers. But we didn't think that to leave the bodies lying in the field, lying in the open, was a very helpful thing. We thought it was the humane thing to bury them. OK, others thought differently -- the Supreme Court stepped in. We -- of course, we accepted the Supreme Court decision. Israel is a state based on the rule of law. But to try to rehash this thing time and time again, I think enough is enough.

PHILLIPS: How did the bodies, though, were not allowed to be buried... The Red Cross and The Red Crescent were not allowed to come in and help the wounded. In addition to the media. The media was not allowed in the camp.

SHOWAL: My dear lady, this is a battle. The media were not allowed to get into the caves in Afghanistan when the Americans were bombing. This is a war. This is not some sort of play-acting. This is a war. I could imagine what the media would have said if some journalist would have been killed in cross fire. We don't want that.

PHILLIPS: Of course. None of us wants that. That's why we wear bullet-proof vests, and we try to cover the territories when allowed in there...Mr. Rahman, go ahead.

RAHMAN: First of all, those are not caves. Jenin is not a cave. A refugee camp is not a cave. This is the home of 14,000 people. It is a city where there are tens of thousands of people living. Second, Mr. Showal said that there was a battle. There was an invasion. There were helicopters used. There were tanks used against civilian quarters against homes of people. Bulldozers bulldozed homes over its inhabitants.

Mr. Showal is really perpetuating a lie when he says there is 65 people killed, only. Mr. Kittery (ph) who is the commander of the Israeli army, yesterday said we acknowledge there were hundreds of Palestinians killed. This was quoted on the Israeli Army Radio. Now you come here to tell us 65 people.

Why did not you allow the international community to observe what was going on in the refugee camp. Why you did not allow -- you do not allow even today -- aides to reach hospitals in the city of Raebli (ph), Nablus, Ramallah, etc., etc. Why do you have to not electricity from hospitals? Why do you have to interrupt telephone communication by destroying poles -- telephone poles? Why do you have to do these things?

O'BRIEN: All right. I think...

RAHMAN: Why do you have to do so many things?

O'BRIEN: Mr. Rahman, we've got the idea, we've got the idea of the question. Let's let Mr. Showal respond.

RAHMAN: Let me just -- one other sentence. This is not a war against terrorism. This is a colonial war. You are occupying other people illegally, under international law. You are occupying the Palestinian territories. And the Palestinian people are defending themselves. It is not Afghanistan. Because Afghanistan, when bin Laden attacked the United States, the United States was not occupying...

O'BRIEN: Now wait a minute. Mr. Rahman, let me just, before we send it over to Mr. Showal -- in defending yourselves, are you justifying the acts of terrorism. Is that what you're saying?

Interview with Zalman Showal, Abdel Rahman CNN April 14, 2002 Sunday

RAHMAN: No! I am not. No. What I am saying -- there is two different issues here. It is the right of any people who fall under full military occupation to defend themselves. That is different from suicide bombing. But to defend your home in Jenin, you are not a terrorist when you are invaded by an Israeli tank.

I am sure that if any of your neighbors attacked you in the United States, every one of you will defend themselves and fight back. So why are the Palestinians people have to not -- do not have the right to defend themselves when the Israeli tanks roll into the streets of Ramallah and Jenin?

O'BRIEN: Mr. Showal, lots to respond to there. Go ahead.

SHOWAL: Well, you know, Mr. Abdul Rahman is making out as if Yasser Arafat is Mother Teresa...

RAHMAN: No, I'm not...

SHOWAL: We have been exposed to a terrorist offensive -- I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I didn't interrupt you -- the last 20 odd months. We are defending ourselves. Israeli is today the main front in the fight of the civilized world against terrorism.

Instead of trying to bring up all these arguments, Mr. Rahman, tell your leader, stop this. Let's get back to the negotiating table. People are being killed on both sides, but you are committing acts of terror -- the Jerusalem marketplace is not a place where you fight battles, it's where you kill innocent women and children and people.

Stop this! Let's get to the negotiating table. Political settlements can be achieved if you decide terrorism is not the right way to do it. That is all I am saying. Our people are being killed, your people are being killed. We are defending ourselves, you think you are defending yourselves. We are willing to come to negotiate. You have so far told us we shall only negotiate with suicide bombers, or as President Bush has said -- homicide bombers. Enough already. Let's stop this.

O'BRIEN: All right. I think that is probably where we are going to have to stop this interview. I appreciate this, gentlemen -- did you want to say one more point briefly, Mr. Rahman?

RAHMAN: Thank you. Yes, want to say that we want to negotiate, but Mr. Showal did not address the basic issue, and that is 36 years of illegal military occupation which included also, in addition to stealing Palestinian dignity, they steal Palestinian land by moving Jewish settlers there. Move your Jewish settlers from the Palestinian territories. Get your armies out, and I assure you that we will have peace between your state and our state.

We want that, we are committed to that and I promise you that once Israel withdraws from the West Bank and Gaza and allows the Palestinian states to come to (UNINTELLIGIBLE) we will have peace between our two peoples, because we cannot have peace while your tanks and your army and your settlers are occupying our land.

PHILLIPS: Hasam Abdel Rahman and Zalman Showal, both of you, thank you so much. Mr. Showal, you mentioned you wanted us to make the point that we must understand it is a difficult situation and we don't discount that at all. We completely understand that. We thank both of you for coming on and sharing both sides.

RAHMAN: Thank you. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT www.fdch.com

LOAD-DATE: July 11, 2003

Palestinian representative to the US, Hassan Rahman, explains his country's side of the conflict NBC News
Transcripts April 14, 2002 Sunday



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NBC News Transcripts

SHOW: Sunday Today (9:00 AM ET) - NBC

April 14, 2002 Sunday

LENGTH: 599 words

HEADLINE: Palestinian representative to the US, Hassan Rahman, explains his country's side of the conflict

ANCHORS: CAMPBELL BROWN; MAURICE DuBOIS

BODY:

CAMPBELL BROWN, co-host:

Hassan Abdel Rahman is the chief Palestinian representative to the United States.

Good morning, Mr. Rahman.

Mr. HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN (Chief Palestinian Representative To The US): Good morning.

BROWN: As you heard Andrea Mitchell report a moment ago, Secretary Powell called this a, quote, "useful and constructive exchange." Have you had a chance to speak with anyone in Ramallah, and can you give us your sense for how the meeting went?

Mr. RAHMAN: No, I did not, because the Palestinian delegation is still meeting with President Arafat to assess the results of the meeting with Secretary Powell. But I can assure you that the Palestinians will do their part of any agreement once Israel carries on the Security Council Resolution 1402 and the demand that was made by President Bush for Israel to halt its crimes in the West Bank, its invasion, and withdraw its troops as required by the Security Council resolutions and by President Bush.

BROWN: Let me ask you, Mr. Rahman, why did it take this long for Yasser Arafat to condemn the violence, in particular the bombing in Jerusalem on Saturday?

Mr. RAHMAN: No, Yasser Arafat condemned the violence many times before, and I can point to two major speeches he addressed to the Palestinian public and to the Arab world. One on the 16th of December in which he called on the Palestinians to stop any violence against the Israelis. And the other one was the 28th of March to the summit in Beirut in which he called on the Palestinians not to hurt Israeli civilians. But, you know, that after the first speech, three weeks there were no operations, Israel continued its mafia-style execution of Palestinians and its incursion into Palestinian territories. And it continued its war crimes, the imposition of the siege on the Palestinian cities and towns, continued to humiliate the Palestinians, and that triggered, really, responses from the Palestinians.

BROWN: But...

Palestinian representative to the US, Hassan Rahman, explains his country's side of the conflict NBC News
Transcripts April 14, 2002 Sunday

Mr. RAHMAN: Today, as I--I listened to Mr. Sharansky, it is very ironic that a man who has spent a great deal of time of his life in a Soviet jail, will j--will participate in the jailing of millions of Palestinians in their own homes. He is inflicting on the Palestinians what was inflicted on him by the Soviets.

BROWN: Well, Mr. Rahman, you obviously don't believe the US is doing enough to pressure Israel to withdraw their troops, but at the same time Israel is a sovereign country, the US cannot force them out. So what do you really expect the US Secretary Powell to do?

Mr. RAHMAN: Two things, first of all, Israel is not only defying the US, Israel is defying the Security Council of the United Nations. Second, it is able to defy the Security Council and the United States because of the protection that the United States provide to it. Remember that since Israel's inception the United States gave Israel \$130 billion worth of weapons. All those weapons that Israel is using to destroy Palestinians' homes, commit massacres in the Palestinian territories, continue its occupation of the Palestinian territories are made in the United States. And, therefore, the United States should have some influence over its client, the state of Israel.

BROWN: Hassan Abdel Rahman, thank you for being with us this morning.

Mr. RAHMAN: You are welcome.

BROWN: And let's get to the rest of the morning's top stories and your Sunday forecast. WNBC's Maurice DuBois is at the newsdesk.

Hey, there, Maurice.

MAURICE DuBOIS, anchor:

Good morning, Campbell, thank you very much.

And good morning, everyone.

LOAD-DATE: April 15, 2002

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April 14, 2002 Sunday

Powell to meet with Arafat; Palestinian leader meets U.S. demand, decries terror The Herald-Sun (Durham, NC)
April 14, 2002 Sunday



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The Herald-Sun (Durham, NC)

April 14, 2002 Sunday
Final Edition

SECTION: FRONT; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1351 words

HEADLINE: Powell to meet with Arafat;
Palestinian leader meets U.S. demand, decries terror

BYLINE: By BARRY SCHWEID Associated Press

BODY:

JERUSALEM - Struggling to salvage his peace mission, Secretary of State Colin Powell will press Yasser Arafat when they meet today to take "effective action" to end Palestinian attacks against Israel. Powell also is calling for restraint by Israeli forces on the West Bank.

Acting on the Palestinian leader's denunciation of terror in a statement the White House demanded, Powell rescheduled Saturday's postponed meeting with Arafat and other senior Palestinians in Ramallah.

The statement included "a number of interesting and positive elements," such as condemnation of terror and a Jerusalem bombing on Friday, as well as reaffirmation of a Palestinian commitment to a negotiated peace with Israel, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said.

Also, the statement called for immediate implementation of a shelved cease-fire plan prepared by CIA Director George Tenet, Boucher said.

"The secretary will work with Chairman Arafat and the Palestinian leadership to show leadership and to help make these statements a reality, with effective action to bring an end to terror and violence and an early resumption of a political process," Boucher said.

Powell consulted by telephone with King Abdullah II of Jordan, Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and European officials before deciding to go ahead with the meeting.

In what appeared to be synchronized diplomacy, Powell said Israeli troops must refrain from "excessive use of force," and singled out Jenin, an embattled Palestinian town, for special concern.

"We are particularly concerned at the humanitarian situation," Powell said of Israeli operations in Jenin that Palestinian and outside observers have condemned as heavy-handed.

Arafat responded with his statement denouncing terrorism. It was the kind of statement President Bush was looking for so Powell could go ahead with the meeting in Ramallah, where the Palestinian leader has been confined in his office by Israeli troops.

Powell to meet with Arafat; Palestinian leader meets U.S. demand, decries terror The Herald-Sun (Durham, NC)
April 14, 2002 Sunday

The statement condemned the Jerusalem bombing, which killed six people and injured scores and prompted Powell to put off his meeting with Arafat.

"We are condemning strongly all the attacks which are targeting civilians from both sides and especially the attack that took place against Israeli citizens yesterday in Jerusalem," the statement said.

But Arafat also lashed out at Israel's West Bank operation: "We also condemn very strongly the massacre that was committed by the Israeli occupation troops against our refugees in Jenin and against our people in Ramallah, Nablus and Tulkarem and also the brutal aggression against the church in Bethlehem during the last two weeks."

Notwithstanding the Arafat statement, Ismail Abu Shanab, spokesman for the Islamic militant group Hamas, indicated attacks would go on. "We have the full right to react without any limitation against the state terrorism of Israel," he said.

Israeli forces moved into more West Bank villages Saturday and arrested 40 suspected militants. Several Israeli tanks shelled the Palestinian government complex in Nablus.

South of Nablus, in the village of Jamain, a wanted leader of the militant group Hamas, Ahmed Ali, 39, was shot and killed by Israeli soldiers in an orange grove Saturday, residents said. The Israeli army did not immediately comment.

Arafat's statement, in Arabic, was distributed by the Palestinian news service WAFA and was read several times on Palestinian television and radio, giving it the circulation the Bush administration wanted.

The Israeli government dismissed the statement and noted that the suicide bomber that struck Friday was sent by Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, a militia linked to Arafat's Fatah movement.

"We want deeds, not words," said Danny Ayalon, foreign policy adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. "We cannot be impressed by any condemnation of their doings and their own strategies, which continue."

Boucher declined to make a judgment on Powell's chances of securing a cease-fire and steering the two sides to peacemaking and a Palestinian state. "I am sure as we go along we will look to both sides to fulfill the pledges they made," he said.

It was disclosed that U.S. mediator Anthony Zinni had met Friday in Jericho with Palestinian officials.

Earlier Saturday, Powell issued a statement calling on Israeli forces in the West Bank to "exercise the utmost restraint and discipline and refrain from the excessive use of force."

Sharon has not complied with Bush's call for a swift withdrawal. Powell, too, has been unable to persuade Sharon to provide a timetable for removing troops from Palestinian cities and towns.

A top Arafat aide, Hassan Abdel Rahman, said in Washington that Arafat wanted to cooperate with Powell, but also needed to hear from the administration a condemnation of Israeli military's actions against Palestinian civilians.

Powell met with Christian religious leaders and aid workers while awaiting Arafat's response.

Rene Kosirnik, head of the Red Cross delegation to Israel, said Israeli forces on the West Bank were subjecting the Palestinian people to "collective punishment."

"The whole population should not suffer so much," he said.

Kosirnik singled out the refugee camps near Jenin, saying conditions were especially bad and that Israel was denying access to the Red Cross.

Richard Cook, West Bank field director for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, said dead bodies were piling up.

Powell to meet with Arafat; Palestinian leader meets U.S. demand, decries terror The Herald-Sun (Durham, NC)
April 14, 2002 Sunday

Following his meeting with five officials of U.N. and Red Cross aid groups, Powell announced the United States will contribute an additional \$30 million for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency on top of the \$80 million already contributed annually.

Through the U.S. Agency for International Development, the administration is providing \$62 million in assistance for health care, water system repairs and emergency food aid, Powell said.

"We call upon the international community to do all it can to help at this time of exceptional Palestinian need," he said.

Excerpts from Arafat's statement

Here are excerpts of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's statement denouncing terrorism, as translated from the Arabic by the U.S. government Saturday:

President Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian leadership express their condemnation of all terrorist acts against civilians, whether they are Israelis or Palestinians and whether this terrorism is sponsored by a state, group or person.

This is based on a firm principle rejecting the use of violence and terrorism against civilians or as a means to achieve political aims.

We have embraced this position since 1988. We expressed it upon signing the (1993) Oslo accord at the White House and reiterated it several times, including in what we announced on Dec. 16, 2001 (in an address to the Palestinian people), and afterward.

We, however, received no Israeli response, but rather a military escalation, a choking siege, a continued occupation of our people, camps, cities and villages, and a comprehensive destruction of our infrastructure.

On this basis, we strongly condemn the violent operations that target Israeli civilians, especially the recent operation in Jerusalem.

We also strongly condemn the massacres the Israeli occupation forces have been committing for the past two weeks against the Palestinian civilians and refugees in the city of Nablus and Jenin camp, against the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and in other Palestinian areas.

We urge the international community, the (United Nations) Security Council and Mr. Colin Powell, who is on an international mission for peace, to get acquainted with these massacres and blood baths plaguing our people due to the Israeli occupation and also (with) the Israeli government's determination to squash our people's quest for freedom and independence with military force, tanks, aircraft, missiles, shells and machine guns.

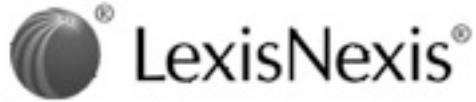
We, on behalf of the Palestinian people, reiterate anew our commitment to the option of a just peace between the two peoples and two countries, a peace that would bring security to the Israelis and independence and freedom in an independent state for the Palestinian people.

- Knight Ridder

GRAPHIC: Photo: Associated Press, Palestinians remove rubble Friday from the site of a destroyed home in the center of the West Bank town of Nablus. Rescue workers said they pulled out eight Palestinian bodies, including those of a pregnant woman, her husband and their three sons. Mahmoud Shobi said his eight relatives were crushed when Israeli bulldozers demolished the building near their home. Hospital officials confirmed the deaths as Israel said it was unaware of them.

LOAD-DATE: August 17, 2004

Arafat still a key player; Analysis: Meeting with Palestinian leader essential for success of Powell's mission. Long Beach Press-Telegram (Long Beach, CA) April 14, 2002 Sunday



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Long Beach Press-Telegram (Long Beach, CA)

April 14, 2002 Sunday

LENGTH: 941 words

HEADLINE: Arafat still a key player;
Analysis: Meeting with Palestinian leader essential for success of Powell's mission.

BYLINE: By Todd S. Purdum

BODY:

The New York Times JERUSALEM From the moment President Bush ordered Secretary of State Colin Powell to the Middle East 10 days ago, two points were crystal clear: Any meeting with Yasser Arafat would cause deep controversy in the United States and Israel, and Powell's peace mission would have no hope of success without one.

The question was never whether, but when and how. On Saturday night, after an elaborate diplomatic dance that gave nods to U.S., Israeli and Palestinian sensitivities, the final decision came down: Powell, under armed Israeli escort, would see the Palestinian leader in the ruins of his West Bank compound in Ramallah today.

That a meeting with Arafat could loom so large is a reflection of how much the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has spun out of control into violence since the collapse of the Clinton administration's peace talks at Camp David two years ago, coupled with Bush's deep skepticism about Arafat's trustworthiness as a negotiating partner.

For days, as Powell traveled through Arab and European capitals on his way here, he and his senior aides went out of their way to leave the matter unresolved. They never set ironclad public conditions, while repeating what European and Arab allies told them: that most of the world saw Arafat as the designated spokesman for the Palestinian cause.

The message, to critics in Israel and skeptics in Washington alike, was repeated again and again: Arafat may not be likable, or honorable, but he must be dealt with. By the time Powell arrived in Israel on Thursday night, his schedule was set: a meeting with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Friday and a meeting with Arafat on Saturday.

Even after a Palestinian militia linked to Arafat's faction, Al Fatah, took responsibility for a suicide bombing here on Friday, and Powell canceled Saturday's meeting, his spokesman Richard A. Boucher drew no lines in the sand. He simply repeated long-standing U.S. demands that Arafat condemn that attack, and terrorism in general, while hinting that a meeting was still possible today.

"It wasn't a condition, because we knew that to make this trip successful, we had to see Chairman Arafat on the issues, and try to move the process along, a senior U.S. official said Saturday night.

Vice President Dick Cheney came to grief on his trip to the region last month, when he set conditions for a meeting with Arafat, only to declare days later that they had not been met. In no small measure, that failure made Powell's visit all but inevitable, and his aides were determined not to get drawn into the same corner.

Arafat still a key player; Analysis: Meeting with Palestinian leader essential for success of Powell's mission. Long Beach Press-Telegram (Long Beach, CA) April 14, 2002 Sunday

Still, officials said, the U.S. special envoy, Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, made it clear in a meeting with other Palestinian officials after the bombing on Friday that Powell was expecting strong words from Arafat. The White House spokesman said the same thing in public.

At first, there was ominous silence from Arafat. He issued no statement Friday night, and none Saturday morning. His close aide Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief Palestinian representative in Washington, said a statement would have come sooner, but Arafat, confined to a few rooms with limited communication, had been unable to consult with advisers.

Arafat and the Palestinians also wanted some strong words from Powell condemning Israel's raids on West Bank towns and camps, especially in Jenin, where Palestinians have accused the Israeli army of conducting a massacre of civilians.

"In other words, the Palestinian people are looking to the United States to have the same respect for civilian life on the Israeli side and for the Palestinian side, Rahman said in a telephone interview. "That would in many ways calm Palestinian and Arab public opinion, because there is a great deal of resentment for this focus on Israeli life, and a neglect of the suffering of the Palestinians.

On Saturday morning, at a meeting with aid groups, Powell called on Israel to "respect international humanitarian principles and to allow full and unimpeded access to humanitarian organizations, and added: "We are particularly concerned at the humanitarian situation in Jenin. At the same time, he announced that the United States was providing millions of dollars in additional relief and reconstruction aid for Palestinians.

Neither Palestinian nor U.S. officials described Powell's comments as any kind of quid pro quo. But hours later, at about 4 p.m., Powell received a statement from Arafat condemning the attack, recommitting himself to U.S.-drafted negotiating proposals and noting Powell's "presence among us to stop this war. The State Department's Arabic interpreter, Gamal Helal, translated the statement, and Powell and his top aides caucused in their hotel here to review it.

Arafat's statement bitterly criticized Israel, referring to "a choking siege, a continued occupation of our people, camps, cities and villages, and a comprehensive destruction of our infrastructure.

It also described the latest suicide bombing in quasi-military terms as "the recent operation in Jerusalem. But Powell and his aides chose to look past all that, just as they had looked past Sharon's unyielding comments on Friday.

Shortly before 8 o'clock Saturday night, Boucher emerged to say that the meeting with Arafat was back on, for today, in an effort "to help make these statements a reality.

Asked how a meeting, or lack of one, had become such a big deal, Boucher insisted, "I don't know that we made it a big deal.

But when a reporter asked whether Powell had any hope of progress without a meeting with Arafat, Boucher finished the sentence by saying, "That's taking place tomorrow.

LOAD-DATE: October 20, 2003

SHOW: CNN BREAKING NEWS 09:01

April 13, 2002 Saturday

Transcript # 041301CN.V00

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 4287 words

HEADLINE: Palestinian Authority Condemns Attacks Against All Civilians

GUESTS: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Saeb Erakat, Ehud Olmert

BYLINE: Kyra Phillips, Miles O'Brien, Andrea Koppel, Kelly Wallace

HIGHLIGHT:

Palestinian Authority has condemned attacks against all civilians, Palestinian and Israeli alike.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

KYRA PHILLIPS, CNN ANCHOR: Well, first reaction to that statement, Palestinian representative to the U.S. **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, he's joining us now on the phone to talk about that.

Sir, your first reaction to the statement?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED STATES: Well, this is really an reiteration of the position of the Palestinian Authority and the PLO this -- on March 28, President Arafat made the speech in Arabic to the Arab summit conference, and he condemned attacks on civilians and called on the Palestinians not to hurt Israeli civilians.

And he -- this is a standard position of the Palestinians.

But I think what is needed now is an equal position from the United States and Israel to condemn all acts of violence against all civilians, also

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Palestinians and Israelis.

This really would change the climate, it would change the environment and the feeling of the Palestinians that the United States is an honest broker, is -- treats Palestinian lives with the same respect that it treats Israeli lives.

PHILLIPS: Mr. Rahman, I'm going to ask you just to stand put there for a minute. I understand we have Saeb Erakat, the chief Palestinian negotiator, on the line. He is inside the Ramallah compound where Arafat is still being isolated.

Sir, can you hear me OK?

SAEB ERAKAT, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: Yes, I can.

PHILLIPS: Well, I guess what we all want to know is, was Yasser Arafat involved in this statement, in the decision to make this statement, sir?

ERAKAT: I think President Arafat is the one who made the statement, actually, President Arafat and the Palestinian leadership expressed their condemnation for all terrorist activities, whether it's targeting Israeli civilians or Palestinian civilians. And this context we condemn with the strongest possible terms, the massacres committed against our people in Jenin and Nablus, and we also condemn the targeting of Israeli civilians, as what happened yesterday in West Jerusalem.

We condemn these operations. We've been consistent in condemning these attacks against the Israeli civilians, against Palestinian civilians, and we really urge the international community to show some sensitivity about what the massacres that are being committed against the Palestinian people. I'm not saying life is fair, I'm not saying life is about justice. But a

whole nation of people are being targeted by the Israelis, our life is being destroyed. We no longer have an infrastructure of anything on the ground. We no longer have schools, we no longer have (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

PHILLIPS: Looks like we've lost our contact with Saeb Erakat, the chief Palestinian negotiator.

Let's go back to **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, standing by in Washington. Sir, why don't we just sort of pick up what Mr. Erakat was saying there, if you'd like, and continue the conversation...

RAHMAN: Yes...

PHILLIPS: ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

RAHMAN: ... what Saeb is saying is really, we need to be treated equally and with equal respect, like the Israelis are treated. For the last 15 days, we have seen atrocities committed by Israel, and they continue to commit them. A whole nation is under siege, no food, no medicine. We are -- I have the minister of health today speaking, a Palestinian minister of health. There's a risk of an epidemic in the West Bank because of lack of sanitation, lack of care.

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This is inhuman treatment of the Palestinians, and it should really solicit the attention of President Bush. He should speak loudly, and American officials in general, like other officials around the world, the Europeans...

PHILLIPS: Well, (UNINTELLIGIBLE), sir, President Bush, he...

RAHMAN: Yes?

PHILLIPS: ... he has, he has come forward and made it very clear to Ariel Sharon that he is asking for withdrawal of troops. That point has been made over and over again. And so I do want to make the point...

RAHMAN: No, no, but I did not hear President Bush condemning the killing of Palestinian civilians. He, yes, asked Sharon, and Sharon so far has defied President Bush. In fact, not only President Bush, he has defied the international community and the Security Council resolutions, with impunity. I mean, listen, the United States is mobilizing the international community to attack Iraq for violating -- alleged violation of Security Council resolutions. Why the United States is so soft on Israel when Israel defies the will of the international community?

And this is not the first time.

PHILLIPS: Mr. Rahman, I want to ask you this question, it's been...

RAHMAN: What?

PHILLIPS: ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE) -- come -- I can't stop thinking about it. With regard to the suicide bombing that happened yesterday, Al Aqsa Brigade.

RAHMAN: Yes.

PHILLIPS: I -- it's so hard for me to try and understand why the suicide bombings continue even as this meeting between Arafat and Powell, it was coming so close, they were so close together, yet these suicide bombings continue, a cause which I thought is in support of Yasser Arafat, yet they continue to do these bombings.

Is this disrespectful to Arafat? Do you think it's disrespectful to this meeting that is trying to happen?

RAHMAN: I don't think it has to do anything with Arafat or with the meeting. It has to do with the desperation of the Palestinian people. There are people who has been pushed to the position in which there is not much difference for them between life and death.

If you live for three generations under Israeli occupation, that you are robbed of your dignity, you are humiliated on daily basis, look at what the

Israelis have been doing to the Palestinians. Look at what...

PHILLIPS: I understand, but -- (UNINTELLIGIBLE) -- I...

RAHMAN: Yes. So this -- you know, looking, this is not the first time in

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history this happens. What were the kamikazes in the Second World War? Those are people who are fed up. They are angry, they are frustrated, and they don't even think of Arafat or of anybody else. They want to take revenge against the Israelis, because...

PHILLIPS: But isn't there an understanding here...

RAHMAN: ... they feel...

PHILLIPS: ... at all, an understanding at all that that Secretary of State Colin Powell is one mile -- one mile -- from Yasser Arafat in this, or one mile from the suicide bombing when it happened, and just moments away from meeting with Yasser Arafat?

RAHMAN: Yes, but, you know, they look also to see what is happening in their own homes at the hands of the Israelis. They don't think too much of what Sharon tells Colin Powell or Colin Powell tells Sharon, because they also see what the Israeli army is doing to them in their own homes. That's what they are thinking about.

There was an (UNINTELLIGIBLE) with one woman, and they asked her, and she said, "Of course, when I see my people massacred by the Israelis, I want to take revenge."

Of course, I disagree with it. I hate to see our people killing themselves and killing others in the process. But we have -- it is not enough to condemn it. You have to remove the causes for it. And the cause for it is the desperation and the system of terror that has been imposed on the Palestinian people for 36 years, the stealing of their land, the humiliation, the killing, the deprivation of the Palestinians.

PHILLIPS: Mr...

RAHMAN: We are the only people in the world who live under foreign military occupation today.

PHILLIPS: ... Hasan...

RAHMAN: And Israel is the only colonial power that is occupying other people.

PHILLIPS: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, please hold that thought there, Palestinian representative to the U.S. I'm going to ask you to stand by. We have some new information here.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

PHILLIPS: I'm -- absolutely, please stand by. We'll go to Miles here.

MILES O'BRIEN, CNN ANCHOR: All right, events unfolding as we speak. As we've been telling you, a statement from the Palestinian Authority, though not in the person of Yasser Arafat, condemning violence against innocent civilians on both sides of the fence, so to speak.

For more on the reaction from the secretary of state's party, Colin Powell,

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we are joined by Andrea Koppel, who is Jerusalem.

Andrea, any word yet from Mr. Powell or his people?

ANDREA KOPPEL, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Miles, I've just spoken with a senior State Department official traveling with Secretary Powell. He said that they are looking at the statement right now. As you know, it was issued in Arabic. State Department officials are in the midst of translating the statement. He said, "If it is what it appears to be, that would be a good thing," in his words.

No official reaction yet in terms of whether or not that would mean Secretary Powell would go ahead with the meeting tomorrow, but certainly that was one of the conditions, the main condition that the secretary of state had laid out before Yasser Arafat in order for such a meeting to move ahead.

This is a meeting that the U.S. does want to happen. They've heard Secretary Powell during his travels through the region, before he arrived in Jerusalem, heard from every Arab leader that he met with that the United States must sit down with Yasser Arafat, must show the international community that Israel's attempts to isolate Arafat and make him irrelevant have not worked.

And so it is very much in U.S. interests as it seeks to try to find a way out of this horrible situation here, to meet with the leader of the Palestinian people, Miles.

In addition, Secretary Powell, as far as the rest of his day is concerned, I'm told that he is going to be meeting with his team here in Jerusalem, but he has no plans to meet with the Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon, this evening, as some had speculated he might.

So as things stand right now, the team traveling with Secretary Powell is translating Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority statement. It was not made in his name, but it does seem to satisfy the fundamental condition that was laid out by Secretary Powell in that it condemns Friday's suicide bombing here in Jerusalem, Miles.

O'BRIEN: So it seems, at least, at least under first blush of your first contact with the sources there, that General Powell is perhaps willing to allow this bit of face-saving in accepting this particular statement potentially as the pretext for a meeting.

KOPPEL: I would say that it was the -- it was the statement that the U.S. felt that it had to have from Yasser Arafat, from his leadership, before any kind of meeting could go forward. The Israeli government, as you might imagine, wasn't in favor of this meeting to begin with, and then following Friday's attack here in Jerusalem, was all the more outraged over the prospects of Secretary Powell meeting with the leader of the Palestinian people when the suicide bomber was a young Palestinian woman.

So certainly it would seem to satisfy the basic condition. And I think, Miles, it wouldn't be too much of a stretch to say that this meeting will likely go forward on Sunday.

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KOPPEL: Miles?

O'BRIEN: All right, thank you very much, Andrea Koppel. We'll of course be staying in close contact with her all throughout the day as we hear the reaction and as events unfold.

One of the people who was very close to that bombing just referred to yesterday was the mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert, who is now our guest. Thank you for being with us, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR EHUD OLMERT, JERUSALEM: Yes, good morning.

O'BRIEN: What do you, what do you, what are your thoughts about this statement from the leadership at the Palestinian Authority? Is this something that you see as a way to clear the way for a meeting between the secretary of state of the United States and Yasser Arafat?

OLMERT: You know, I said yesterday when I heard about the chance of a meeting between Secretary Powell and Yasser Arafat that I feel embarrassed for the secretary, that while America fights terror and the president condemns terror and the secretary condemns terror, that he has to meet with the greatest terrorist on earth today.

When I hear now the wording of the condemnation, I feel even more embarrassed for the secretary. I mean, this is entirely ridiculous, to be very honest with you.

O'BRIEN: Why?

OLMERT: There is no condemnation here, because there is no condemnation here. If Arafat had condemned what happened yesterday voluntarily and spontaneously yesterday, that could have meant something. But you need 24 hours to negotiate a very vague and ambiguous wording of condemnation only in order to justify a meeting with Yasser Arafat?

I don't want to speak for my government, but I speak for the people of Jerusalem. We don't need any condemnation. We don't need any apology. We think that this is ridiculous and appalling and insulting.

A man who has been held responsible by the president himself for all these not suicidal bombings, quite frankly, homicide bombings, this is what it is, he is held responsible. Now someone says on his behalf, without naming him, that Palestinians are sorry and condemning the killing of innocent people, Palestinians and Jews and so on and so forth, and the way is clear for a meeting between Secretary Powell and Yasser Arafat.

This is ridiculous. If Secretary Powell wants to meet with this terrorist, all right, we think this is a tragic mistake. But don't mislead yourself that Arafat condemns terrorism. Arafat is the terrorist. Arafat is the one that sends the terrorists. Arafat is the one that is personally responsible for these killings.

And I think that you all were -- might be very embarrassed if tomorrow there will be another homicide bombings. What then will you ask for Arafat? To
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condemn it again? Will you then cancel the meeting retroactively?

I mean, you are dealing with the greatest terrorist on earth. It's time that you will understand it and draw the necessary conclusions.

O'BRIEN: Mr. Mayor, you call it a tragic mistake. You say that that the U.S. is dealing with a terrorist. What are the alternatives, though? He is the only person at the other side of the bargaining table.

OLMERT: He is only -- he is the only table on the other side because you have decided to look at him as the only table on the other -- only person on the other side of the table.

But he is not a partner for peace, to start with, he is not a partner for peace because he doesn't want to make peace. He doesn't meet any of the preliminary requirements the president made, not what we make.

OK, you can argue with our position and so on, but your president made a few preliminary requirements. He said that Arafat has to take an action to stop terror. He said that it is incumbent upon him. He said that Arafat has betrayed the hopes of his own people by not doing anything to stop terror. Now, from demanding him to stop terror, you are bargaining with him for 24 hours that he will agree to say something against the killing of innocent people in the heart of Jerusalem? And after 24 hours, he agrees to say something in general, not coming from his own mouth, not being said to the cameras by himself, but being attributed to the Palestinians in the most vague words, and you are happy about it?

If you are happy about it, what can I say?

O'BRIEN: Mr. Mayor, you say that Arafat does not want to make peace. There are many on the Palestinian side who will tell you that Mr. Sharon feels the same way and does not want to make peace, but to wage war. What do you say to that?

OLMERT: Yes, yes, first of all, let me take the opportunity. You know, I listened before to the Palestinian spokesman, and he kept talking about the plight of the Palestinians being under siege for such a long time. Let me remind you of something that I think it's about time there will be reemphasized again and again for the international community, which might not be aware of all the facts.

For the last eight years, the majority of the Palestinian population is under Palestinian control. It is not controlled by Israel, not administered by Israel. It is administered by the Palestinian Authority.

This is the most corrupt administration on earth. This is an administration which was given billions of dollars in the last eight years by the international community, including the United States of America, and it was not administered, it was not taken over by the state of Israel, because we were out of all their main cities.

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What did they do to improve the quality of life of their own people? What did they do to invest in the quality of life of their people, in improving their roads, in improving the infrastructure, in building new schools? Nothing. They have (UNINTELLIGIBLE) for one thing only...

O'BRIEN: Mr. Mayor...

OLMERT: ... to commit homicide, homicide killings...

O'BRIEN: Mr. Mayor...

OLMERT: ... to kill themselves and to kill...

O'BRIEN: Mr. Mayor, I'm sorry, I...

OLMERT: ... innocent people.

O'BRIEN: ... I -- unfortunately I...

OLMERT: That's what they were doing.

O'BRIEN: I -- with time elapsing, I just want to bring you back to the question...

OLMERT: And you are telling me...

O'BRIEN: ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE) -- Can i just bring you back to the question very quickly? Do you...

OLMERT: Yes, I can say only this. Ariel Sharon, the prime minister of Israel, agreed to the conditions of President Bush, agreed to the conditions of General Zinni, agreed to the conditions of Secretary Powell, agreed to pull out from all of the cities only three weeks ago. You remember what drove Israel back into the cities? The massacre in Netanya, the mass killing of innocent people in the middle of a Seder in a religious ceremony in Passover, the killing of innocent people in Haifa.

That's what brought us back into the cities, in order to take over the headquarters of the Palestinian terrorist organizations, where they sent their homicide bombers to our cities. That's all. And we have accepted the condition of the president to pull out from the cities.

Arafat didn't do one thing to stop terror. It is incumbent upon him.

President said it, secretary of state said it, it's time that you will force him to do it, instead of negotiating with him and a statement that he condemns the terrors that he has performed himself.

O'BRIEN: Ehud Olmert, who's the mayor of Jerusalem, thank you very much for sharing your viewpoints with us, sir.

OLMERT: Thank you.

O'BRIEN: Kyra?

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PHILLIPS: Well, for reaction from the White House, we go back to our Kelly Wallace, standing by with a reaction from there. Kelly?

KELLY WALLACE, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, hello again to you, Kyra. I can tell you, I just got off the phone with a senior administration official who said that U.S. officials are, quote, "looking carefully" at what Yasser Arafat said in this statement, as you, Miles, and Andrea were talking about earlier. Of course, the statement in Arabic, it must be translated. Then U.S. officials, again in the words of this one senior aide, "must look carefully at what Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, is saying in this statement." Clearly he is in some way responding to demands coming from President Bush and Secretary of State Colin Powell. President Bush's spokesman, Ari Fleischer, making it very clear yesterday during his briefing that Mr. Bush felt the time was now for Yasser Arafat to come out and condemn Friday's suicide bombing, to denounce terrorism, to show his commitment to stop and crack down on acts of terror. So the key question will be, number one, what exactly is Yasser Arafat saying? How specific was he? Is he doing what this administration wants him to be doing? And then, of course, it comes down to, will this be enough for Secretary Powell to decide to meet with Yasser Arafat as soon as Sunday morning? As we've been saying, U.S. officials continue to say that President Bush has given Secretary Powell really maximum flexibility to carry out this mission, meaning that ultimately it will be Secretary Powell's decision, deciding whether to meet with Yasser Arafat.

One senior aide saying that President Bush has great faith in the secretary's judgment, that he is the one on the ground in the region talking to the parties, that he will be the one to decide if such a meeting should go forward. So we should look for, A, the U.S. officials to look at this statement, get some reaction, and then ultimately they'll have to decide if it's enough to warrant a face-to-face session with the secretary of state.

Kyra?

PHILLIPS: All right, our Kelly Wallace for there from the White House. Thank you so much.

We're going to bring in **Hasan Abdel Rahman** back, our Palestinian representative to the United States. He's been responding to this statement that has been issued.

Sir, I want to give you a chance to respond to what the mayor of Jerusalem had to say, plain and simple, that this statement, to him, is quite an insult, way too vague.

RAHMAN: First of all, he's not the mayor of all of Jerusalem. He is the mayor of half of Jerusalem, because the other half is occupied illegally, and your own government, the United States, and the international community never

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acknowledged the annexation of East Jerusalem to Israel.

So please, next time when you address him, either you address him as the mayor of West Jerusalem, or half of Jerusalem, that he is not the mayor of Jerusalem.

Second, I have not heard Mr. Olmert condemning, in the same way that we condemn the killing of Palestinian civilians and Israeli civilian, he condemns the massacres that were committed by Israel against the Palestinian civilians. Today only, in the city of Nablus, they pulled from under the rubble of a house that was bulldozed by Israel over its inhabitants, six people, three women and three children.

Third, listen, Israel was created by acts of terror. The two former prime

minister of Israel, Menachem Begin and Shamir, were on the most-wanted list of terrorists by the British authorities in Palestine.

Third, Sharon is the man who is responsible for Sabra and Shatila massacres in Lebanon. He is being indicted in Belgium, in other places, for war crimes.

Today he is accusing Yasser Arafat of terrorism. Listen, for us the systematic terrorism is occupation, military occupation, illegal military occupation.

No one is asking Mr. Olmert what the Israelis want to do about military -- its military occupation of the Palestinians. What right does Israel have to continue occupying us and occupying our land, and building exclusive settlements for Jews imported from Moscow, from Brooklyn, New York, from Buenos Aires, Argentina, in our back yard, and arm them with machine guns to harass our people and kill our people?

PHILLIPS: Mr. Rahman, let's get back to...

RAHMAN: (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

PHILLIPS: ... the statement, let's get back to the statement here at hand.

And I understand your points, absolutely. But let's move on to the statement.

And I just -- the question is out there, why is Yasser Arafat not the one coming forward, getting the television cameras, and making the statement himself?

RAHMAN: Can you get, first of all, television cameras into his compound?

Second, Yasser Arafat is not alone, Yasser Arafat has a leadership. He is the leadership -- he is the leader of...

PHILLIPS: Sir, there have been plenty of cameras in there.

RAHMAN: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) -- no, no, no...

PHILLIPS: We've had many exclusive televised interviews...

RAHMAN: ... but -- but -- but...

PHILLIPS: ... with Yasser Arafat with our cameras. So why not -- why does Yasser Arafat not take advantage of that and come out, make this statement himself, sir?

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RAHMAN: Yes, OK, let's -- I with -- in my previous statement to the speech that Yasser Arafat addressed to the Arab summit conference, in which he stated that particular statement, (UNINTELLIGIBLE) the spokesperson for the Palestinian Authority, on behalf of Yasser Arafat.

You have Saeb Erakat saying that. This is a statement that was drafted, and I am issuing it on behalf of Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority.

Yasser Arafat is not something and the Palestinian Authority is something else.

He is the president of the Palestinian Authority.

PHILLIPS: But Yasser Arafat is the man...

RAHMAN: And we do not -- let -- let -- let me...

PHILLIPS: ... to meet with Secretary of State Colin Powell.

RAHMAN: Yes, but, but he is not...

PHILLIPS: This is the person with whom people want to hear from.

RAHMAN: ... but he is not meeting him in his personal capacity. Yasser Arafat is meeting him as the leader of the Palestinian people. We do not like the fact that Yasser Arafat is singled out. We -- this is a leadership position, this is a Palestinian Authority position, and that's why it was made on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, because we do not like to see Yasser Arafat singled out or pointed at.

Yasser Arafat is the leader of the Palestinian people, and whenever a statement is made on behalf of the Palestinian Authority, it's also made on behalf of Yasser Arafat.

PHILLIPS: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Palestinian representative to the United States, thank you, sir, for joining us there at the last minute. No doubt we'll

be talking to you...

RAHMAN: thank you.

PHILLIPS: ... throughout the morning. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT www.fdch.com

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CNN

SHOW: CNN WOLF BLITZER REPORTS 17:00

April 12, 2002 Friday

Transcript # 041200CN.V67

SECTION: News; Domestic

LENGTH: 7755 words

HEADLINE: Terror Strikes Jerusalem Again; Secretary Powell Visits Israeli Prime Minister

GUESTS: Daniel Ayalon, Sari Nusseibeh, Gil Kleiman, Dr. Mustafa Bargouti

BYLINE: Wolf Blitzer, Jason Bellini, Rula Amin, Kelly Wallace, Andrea Koppel, Fredricka Whitfield, Lou Dobbs

HIGHLIGHT:

Terror strikes Jerusalem again as a suicide bomber kills six and injures dozens. Plus, Secretary of State Colin Powell met with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to discuss the potential for a cease-fire.

BODY:

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WOLF BLITZER, CNN ANCHOR: Now on WOLF BLITZER REPORTS, "Live From Jerusalem": Terror hits the holy city, again.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) will be welcoming, red carpet for Secretary Powell. Unfortunately, it is covered with Jewish blood.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Another female suicide bomber. Will her acts set back Secretary Powell's search for peace?

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A dispute over the death toll. The Palestinians accuse Israel of a cover-up. And Israel's evidence against Yasser Arafat. Ariel Sharon sends documents to President Bush. Which side will the U.S. take?

It's just after midnight here in Jerusalem. We are coming to you live from a holy city in grief. I'm Wolf Blitzer reporting live from Jerusalem. We are following several major developments right now. We'll get to all of that in a moment. First this Middle East "News Alert."

A suicide bomber has once more hit at the heart of Jerusalem, killing six people and wounding dozens outside a crowded marketplace. The bomber, a young woman, blew herself up next to a city bus. Responsibility is being claimed by

the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, a wing of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement. Coming right after Secretary of State Powell's meeting with the Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon, the bombing has already had an impact on the search for peace. Palestinian officials say tomorrow's planned meeting between Secretary Powell and Yasser Arafat has been postponed for at least 24 hours. U.S. officials are now confirming that meeting has been postponed. Powell flew over the bombing scene on the way to visit Israel's northern border area with Lebanon.

Palestinian officials want Secretary Powell to visit the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank, where they say a massacre took place. New pictures show the aftermath of the fierce fighting there. Israel confirms hundreds of casualties, but Israel insists they resulted from a battle with terrorists.

A Palestinian today opened fire and tossed hand grenades at the Erez (ph) crossing point between Gaza and Israel. An Israeli border policeman and a Palestinian worker were killed, and seven other people wounded before the gunman was shot dead. The Islamic Jihad group is claiming responsibility.

Earlier today, I landed in Ben-Gurion Airport just outside Tel Aviv, shortly after that meeting between Secretary Powell and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon wrapped up. They spent four hours meeting together. I also landed just as another terrorist explosion hit the holy city.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(voice-over): It was just before the start of the Jewish Sabbath when terror once more hit Jerusalem. This time in the city's open-air market, where last-minute shoppers were preparing for the day of rest.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We went over there, and we were the first ones together. So, I saw the bus, you know, the right side of the bus towards the shops over there was all black, which means this is where the explosion was. And then we saw some, you know, somebody, some people with no arms, with no heads, I mean, blood all over.

BLITZER: Israeli police confirm it was a female suicide bomber. Claiming responsibility was the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, affiliated with Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement. It was precisely what visiting Secretary of State Colin Powell feared most, occurring just after 4 1/2 hours of talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Sharon and Powell emerged just before the bombing.

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Minister Ariel Sharon. Sharon and Powell emerged just before the bombing.

ARIEL SHARON, ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER (through translator): Terror cannot co-exist with peace. Terror cannot co-exist with peace.

BLITZER: Powell again condemned Palestinian terrorism, but acknowledged he won no timetable from Sharon for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank.

COLIN POWELL, SECRETARY OF STATE: He is anxious to bring these operations to an end as soon as possible.

BLITZER: Powell also said the U.S. has to look at the broader regional picture.

POWELL: As a friend of Israel, we have to take note of the long-term strategic consequences of the incursions that are under way and its effect on other nations in the region and the international climate.

BLITZER: After the bombing, a Palestinian spokesman said peace will come only when Palestinian lives were as sacred as Israeli ones.

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE: What takes Palestinians to the situation we are in is 36 years of one of the most brutal occupations in modern history. That's what turns people into suicide bombers.

BLITZER: Sharon and Powell left for a tour of Israel's northern border with Lebanon amid growing concerns of warfare breaking out along that frontier.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

(on camera): CNN's Jason Bellini was standing by just as that suicide bombing explosion occurred. He was on the scene. He joins me now live here in Jerusalem. Jason, first of all, congratulations, you're a lucky man. You survived that. But I want to show our viewers some of the videotape you were shooting in a separate story, totally unrelated, obviously, just when that occurred. Let's watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JASON BELLINI, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Grab the tripod. Grab the tripod. Grab the tripod.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: Jason, first of all what was going through your mind when that happened?

BELLINI: When that happened, I was stunned for a moment, just like everyone. And I think people watching the video will see that it is sort of eerie the way people are calm at first, because I don't think people wanted to believe that that's what it was, what it turned out to be, that it turned out to be an explosion. Started moving in the direction from where we thought it came -- we really didn't know how close we were to the explosion. I was in the market at the time. And so it was packed with people and people were loaded down with

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their bags of groceries, their vegetables, their fruits and the food that they were gathering because the market was about to close for the Sabbath. Made our way through those people and then out onto Jaffa Road, which is where this bus explosion -- where the explosion near the bus occurred.

BLITZER: How close did you actually get to the scene of where that bus -- near that bus -- where the explosion did occur?

BELLINI: We were quite close. Probably about five minutes after the explosion, close enough to take a look at the front of the bus where the windows were blown out and be able to see some bodies there around the bus. I, at one point, handed my camera over to my translator who then took the camera and he went up very close to the bus. He got some of the best video that we brought back from the explosion.

BLITZER: Jason, you'd never seen anything even closely resembling the horror, the sights that you saw?

BELLINI: Absolutely not. And I think the most frightening part was when it was coming right at us. When we were making our way out onto that street and we saw people who were gravely wounded and people who were very bloody, people with head injuries coming right in our direction. The one thing that was heartening to see was how civilians in the area helped them out. There was an amazing display of people who rushed over to the people who were injured and helped whisk them away.

BLITZER: So when this happened, the normal reaction -- most people, they hear an explosion, they assume a suicide bombing, they'd want to run away as fast as they could. What you're saying is instead of running away, people were running to the scene?

BELLINI: Some were, although the way this market was laid out, you had to go out one direction or another. And I think people who were closest to that side just wanted to get out because you're in this really confined area and I think that's what scared a lot of people. They just wanted to get away.

BLITZER: And how long did you wind up staying there before you left?

BELLINI: I stayed for about half an hour, and at that point, a number of other CNN journalists had arrived. Sheila MacVicar took over and gathered the

information as it was becoming available on the death count, and I headed back to the bureau with our video.

BLITZER: You're a lucky man, Jason Bellini. You feeling all right? You OK?

BELLINI: I'm doing all right.

BLITZER: You're calmed down?

BELLINI: Now I am.

BLITZER: Thank you. Thanks for that report.

BELLINI: You're welcome.

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BLITZER: The horror that occurred here in Jerusalem is not the only horror that's going on. There has been horror elsewhere. Palestinians accuse Israeli soldiers of engaging in a massacre in the West Bank refugee camp of Jenin. Our Rula Amin is on the scene. She has this report.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

RULA AMIN, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): In addition to the loss of life at Jenin refugee camp, there is also a lot of destruction. Now today, representatives of three different aid agencies, the United Nations, the World Bank and the Norwegian government have tried go into the camp in order to try to assess the damage, assess the destruction in order to be able to mobilize as much help, as much supplies as soon as possible.

For the second day in a row, they were not allowed in. The Israeli army said it was too dangerous and it was not safe. They could not guarantee the safety of those representatives. Still, those representatives as well as the Red Cross said they are willing to take the risk, that this was part of their job. They are willing to take the risk and go in. Still, they were not allowed in just like the journalists. And the people at the camp are reported to be suffering very much shortage of supplies, water, food as well as medicine. Ambulances are still not allowed to go into the camp.

According to U.N. estimates, there are about 3,000 residents of Jenin refugee camp who have become homeless, and the situation is grave, as U.N. officials would put it, and a lot of concern among those aid agencies.

Rula Amin, CNN, on the outskirts of Jenin refugee camp.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: And let's get some Israeli government reaction. Joining me here live in Jerusalem, Daniel Ayalon, the chief foreign policy adviser to the prime minister, Ariel Sharon. We're going to get to the postponement of the Powell/Arafat meeting in a moment. But first of all, you've heard the allegations. Your troops supposedly engaged in a massacre, Saeb Erakat claiming 500 Palestinians killed in Jenin.

DANIEL AYALON, SENIOR SHARON ADVISER: These are lies and incitement, Wolf. We lost 23 soldiers in Jenin in a very fierce -- in the fiercest battle in the territories. It was a real war there. It's a center of terror and we had to fight to get them out.

BLITZER: How many Palestinians do you believe were killed in Jenin during this battle?

AYALON: I don't have the number, but we clearly were engaging in fierce battle. We were shooting only at terrorists who were booby-trapping every corner, every house. Sometimes they may have been using some human shields, civilians as human shields. But the fight was very fierce. And the fact is that we lost many of our men there.

BLITZER: But you know the accusations that international humanitarian workers, the international news media. Your troops are preventing anyone from

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going into Jenin to get an independent eyewitness account.

AYALON: Well, Wolf, this is a war zone. Everything is booby-trapped there. We have to take care of it before we can let anybody in. But the fact is that we see another propaganda, lies of the Palestinians which is a scheme of inciting the whole Arab world and indeed world opinion and shying away from their real responsibility for stopping the terror, which they are perpetrating and really moving ahead for peace.

BLITZER: What is your government's reaction to the decision by Secretary Powell to postpone, at least for 24 hours, his meeting with Yasser Arafat in Ramallah?

AYALON: Well, this is clearly an American decision. What we see here is the devastating pattern of Palestinian terror greeting any peace mission. This has happened before with General Zinni here, with Tenet and with others. We have made gestures, but the Palestinians have responded with terror.

BLITZER: Did Prime Minister Sharon encourage the secretary of state not to meet with Arafat?

AYALON: No. This is not our decision. It is clearly an American decision and we do not interfere with the itinerary of the secretary, of course. We do see Arafat as responsible for all the terror. In fact, he is committing all the terror. He is inspiring it. He is inciting for it. He's financing it. We have all the documents to prove it.

BLITZER: But if there's any way for the secretary to emerge from this region with a relatively modest goal of a cease-fire, doesn't he have to meet with the Palestinian leader?

AYALON: Well, this is the dilemma. He is, on the one hand, the Palestinian leader, but he's also a terrorist. This dilemma is not just ours, it should be the dilemma of the Palestinian people.

BLITZER: So you haven't necessarily completely written off Yasser Arafat as a potential partner in negotiations with your government?

AYALON: No, he has written off himself. He is the one who is conducting all the terror. And we, as I said, once we move into the area, we were appalled by the extent and the depth of the infrastructure of terror. We thought all these organizations of security which were supposed to take care of the terror, they were the ones who are also engaging in terror.

And let me tell you one remark and one reservation that I have is that if the Palestinians were concentrating on building a nation, we all would have been far better off. But indeed they were concentrating on destroying a nation, our nation.

BLITZER: So the prime minister gave the secretary no commitment for a complete withdraw from those territories recently reoccupied?

AYALON: No. We're going to withdraw from all of the territories. We have the highest respect to the president of the United States, to the secretary, to
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the American people. And we have, in fact, started the withdrawal. We have significant withdrawal already done from Tulkarem, from Qalqilya, from 24 other areas, and we will do some more. But we must ensure that terror doesn't bounce back once we withdraw. We have to take care of the -- root out the infrastructure of the terror.

BLITZER: Daniel Ayalon, the chief foreign policy adviser to the prime minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon, thanks for joining us.

AYALON: Thank you.

BLITZER: Thank you very much.

Following all of these developments back in Washington, the president of the United States. He was at the White House when word of the latest suicide bombing occurred here in Jerusalem. Our White House correspondent, Kelly Wallace, is standing by with all the late developments there -- Kelly.

KELLY WALLACE, CNN WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT: Hello to you, Wolf. The president was, in fact, in the middle of his national security council briefing when an aide handed him a note alerting him to the latest suicide bombing. The president then immediately condemning it, something he is now calming a homicide bombing and saying he will not be deterred from seeking peace. But, Wolf, U.S. officials saying on this night that this latest attack, complicating what was already going to be a very difficult mission for Secretary Powell.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(voice-over): Ignoring reporters' questions, President Bush heads off to the Camp David presidential retreat while his administration says it is now reassessing the scheduled meeting between Secretary of State Colin Powell and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. Senior U.S. officials stress they are looking for action from Arafat.

ARI FLEISCHER, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: The president believes that Yasser Arafat needs to publicly come out and condemn today's attack, that this is terrorism, this is murder, and Yasser Arafat needs to renounce it and renounce it soon.

WALLACE: Complicating the decision, pressure from the Israelis, who say such a meeting would reward terror, since the Al Aqsa Martyr Brigades, linked to Arafat's Fatah organization, claimed responsibility for the bloodshed.

On the other side, pressure from Arab leaders and the Palestinians, who say Arafat deserves Powell's ear. Some analysts say there's more to lose by snubbing the Palestinian leader.

GEOFFREY KEMP, THE NIXON CENTER: It will appear that the secretary of state of the most powerful country the world has ever seen is cutting and running in the wake of terrorism. And that will send a terrible message.

WALLACE: The administration says Arafat has not done enough to crack down on

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terror. Now U.S. officials say the Israelis have given them document, documents the Israelis say they seized from Arafat's Ramallah headquarters and show Arafat's top aides financed attacks by Palestinian militants. The Israeli military has been showing some of those documents on its Web site.

U.S. officials say they are determining if the documents are authentic, but do say there is broad agreement within the administration that Arafat's top aides or Arafat himself were involved in the purchase of weapons that may have been used in terror attacks.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

(on camera): And U.S. officials continue to say the president has given Secretary Powell, quote, "maximum flexibility" for his mission. One senior aide telling me the president has great faith in the secretary's judgment. Wolf, the indication is that ultimately, the decision whether or not to meet with Arafat rests with the secretary of state -- Wolf.

BLITZER: Having said that, Kelly, was there any debate as far as you can tell within the White House, within the Bush administration about postponing the meeting with Yasser Arafat?

WALLACE: You know, that is a hard one to answer. We're trying to find that out, Wolf. As you know, some members of this administration, Vice President Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in the past have take a harder line

when it comes to Yasser Arafat, basically recommending the administration sever ties with the Palestinian leader.

Others in the administration, Secretary Powell to name one, believing that he is the leader of the Palestinian Authority. This administration must work with him in order to get any cease-fire and get the two parties back to the bargaining table. So, unclear if there is major debate going on. But the words of senior officials, ultimately since Secretary Powell is on the ground, that he has the best sense of the situation. So most of the decision will rest with what he decides to do, Wolf.

BLITZER: Kelly Wallace at the White House, thanks for that report. And Sari Nusseibeh is often seen as a moderate by both Israelis and Palestinians. He has called for co-existence and cooperation. He's a professor of philosophy. He's also the PLO's representative in East Jerusalem. Earlier today, I spoke with Sari Nusseibeh.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

Sari Nusseibeh, thanks so much for joining us.

The key question, at least, one of the key questions right now in the aftermath of this suicide bombing in Jerusalem earlier today is whether or not the secretary of state, Colin Powell, will go forward and meet with the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, tomorrow. First of all, do you have any inside information on whether that meeting will go forward?

SARI NUSSEIBEH, PLO REPRESENTATIVE FOR JERUSALEM: I wouldn't call it inside
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information, but what I know of the situation is that he will probably go ahead with the meeting in any case. And we heard already earlier, President Bush saying that he isn't going to allow these acts of violence to deter him from pursuing the peace process.

BLITZER: Is it your sense though that if the secretary of state for some reason decides not to meet with Yasser Arafat, what would happen, from your perspective?

NUSSEIBEH: Well, I think even assuming hopefully that they will meet, still the path is going to be extremely difficult to try and construct again, a path of negotiations, a path that will take us back into negotiations and back into a peace environment.

But if he doesn't meet with Mr. Arafat, then obviously the difficulty is going to be multiplied 100 times. Indeed I think it would be catastrophic. So I very much hope that the meeting indeed will take place. I very much hope that Mr. Powell will succeed in trying and arranging for a return to the path of negotiations.

BLITZER: It is your sense, Sari Nusseibeh, that the group that claimed responsibility for today's bombing in Jerusalem, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, which is affiliated, as you well know, with Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, that they are acting deliberately to torpedo this effort that Powell is undertaking to achieve a cease-fire?

NUSSEIBEH: Well, it's quite possible, of course, that this is the case, that certainly this would be a good excuse for Mr. Sharon to tell Mr. Powell that he's justified in going ahead with his policy of incursions into Palestinian cities and towns.

But on the other hand you must also remember that the person apparently who is associated with this comes from Jenin, which is a city and a camp as you know that has been visited by death. I think one shouldn't really be surprised if things like this continue to happen. I think one should try to do one's best in order to try and calm the situation, try to calm the anger on both sides. I

know it's very difficult, but I think it must be done.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: Sari Nusseibeh speaking to me earlier today just before word that the secretary of state has postponed for 24 hours his meeting with Yasser Arafat.

And our Web question of the day is this: Should Colin Powell go ahead and still meet with Yasser Arafat? You can vote. Go to my Web page, cnn.com/wolf. While you are there, let me know what you're thinking. There's a "click here" icon right on the left side of the page. That's where you can send me your comments. I'll try to read some of them on the air each day at the end of this program. That's also, by the way, where you can read my daily online column, cnn.com/wolf.

Coming up, terrorism, followed by heroism. A look at the first responders: Israelis and Palestinians who risked their lives on the frontlines of the
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conflict. Plus:

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

POWELL: I hope we can find a way to come into agreement on this point of the duration of the operations, and get back to a track that will lead to a political settlement.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Just hours after Secretary of State Colin Powell and Prime Minister Sharon spoke of ways to end the violence, a new attack. Will today's bombing take the search for peace off track?

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: This is their attitude with which we have to deal with on a daily basis. All the fantasies from European leaders and where leaders may head, it is entirely cut out from the reality of our lives or these people's lives.

RAHMAN: When your police is under attack, you cannot ask the police to defend Israel and ensure the security of Israel. Mr. Sharon has an agenda. I hope that the United States does not fall into his trap.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Bringing you up-to-date now on a devastating development here in Jerusalem earlier today, a day that began with so much promise as the secretary of state, Colin Powell, opened his talks with Israelis. A female suicide bomber blew herself up at a bus stop in the central part of the city, near a crowded open market. At least six other people were killed, more than 60 others were wounded. The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, affiliated with Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, has claimed responsibility.

The meeting took place just after the prime minister, Ariel Sharon, met with the visiting secretary of state Colin Powell, only about two miles from that Mahane Yehuda (ph) market. The Israeli police force was out in force.

Immediately after that word came of the explosion, which is always the case.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(voice-over): The rhythms of tragedy, by now, all too familiar. A bomb blast, a rocket attack, or ripping gunfire followed by the churning wail of sirens.

For the emergency response teams on both the Israeli and Palestinian sides, this is a day at work. Right there with the police and military, these doctors, paramedics and ambulance drivers work the frontlines of the conflict.

HOSSAM SHARKAWI, PALESTINIAN RED CRESCENT: It's not an easy job, at the best of times, and in this context, it's what drives them is essentially their will

to save lives.

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BLITZER: But on each side, teams deal with elements, physical, political and religious, in order to get to and treat the wounded. The Israeli National Emergency Service, called Magen David Adom, is older than the country itself. Well-trained volunteers speed to the scene, using the most sophisticated equipment, including a new feature: bulletproof ambulances.

YONATAN YAGODOVSKY, MAGEN DAVID ADOM, JERUSALEM: The danger is one obstacle, which we overcome it because of the people and their determination. The other obstacle is the stress.

BLITZER: While the medical teams work on the shell-shocked wounded, another group is there for the dead. Volunteers from Hesed Shel Emet (ph), meaning "true acts of kindness", pray over the bodies and collect remains, ensuring the dead are properly honored under Jewish law.

Palestinian emergency teams, working with the Red Crescent Society, often have trouble just reaching the scene, and some ambulance workers have been killed in the war zone. They are sometimes stopped at checkpoints and searched by Israeli troops. The Red Crescent complains the delays have cost lives.

The reason for these checks, say the Israelis, ambulances have been used to ferry weapons and explosives through Israeli checkpoints to Palestinian militants.

JACOB DALLAL, IDF SPOKESMAN: The reason they have to be checked is because there were incidents in which either explosive devices or terrorists themselves were being transported in ambulances.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER (on camera): But the Palestine Red Crescent Society adamantly completely denies this Israeli accusation.

Joining us now, someone intimately familiar with the first response, Gil Kleiman. He is the spokesman for the Israeli police. First of all, tell us about -- are you suggesting that the Palestinian Red Crescent Society cooperates with these terrorists?

GIL KLEIMAN, ISRAELI POLICE SPOKESMAN: As far as that's concerned, as far as the Israel police are concerned, that's more of a military matter. I know as far as we have -- the dealings that we've been dealing with, I know that last night we had an ambulance that came through a checkpoint in which a body was being transported from Ramallah to Gaza. And on the body, we suspected it was a suicide vest and it turned out to be not true. So, as far as what the military has been doing, I really can't comment.

BLITZER: So, you personally have never been involved? You've never seen that?

KLEIMAN: No. I deal with all victims. I deal with what we see, what the Israel police, which is, like I said, day-to-day violence and day-to-day suicide attack. We had one this morning. The day started off with a border policeman being killed down in Gaza. From his funeral at 3:30, we went to the suicide incident on Jaffa Road. So this has been a very difficult period for us, over a

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year and a half.

BLITZER: Now, you were there at the open-air market, the Mahane Yehuda (ph) market. When you got there, what's your immediate responsibility?

KLEIMAN: Well, as a spokesman, of course, my responsibility is first to see the scene, get the outlay of the scene, see what's going on. But I'm just a smart part of it. Policemen are responding almost immediately. As far as

suicide bombings or any bombings are occurred, the response time is almost -- we get there within a second. That's because we have policemen on the scene. Today, a couple of policemen were wounded at the Mahane Yehuda bombing. The response time is zero. They have targeted mostly civilians. So, immediately with the bomb going off, we have calls flooding our 911.

And, like I said, we get their first and the first cause -- thing that we must do or try to do is save those lives. So even policemen who are slightly trained in paramedic work or medical work, deal immediately with the people who are wounded, that's our first option.

BLITZER: What do you say to frustrated Israelis, who see this operation under way now in the West Bank for two weeks, yet suicide bombings continue?

KLEIMAN: Well, we've said that, we have said that we as Israeli police, we haven't taken a day off in a year and a half. We're dealing with a situation today where even if we catch 99 out of 100 suicide bombers, one suicide bomber that gets in can do, like we saw today, a lot of devastation. So we don't have that luxury of saying OK, someone else is taking care of the problem. We're on the scene. As I said for about a year and a half for mobilization.

Our work assumption is that this is going to go on for some time. We've been at the same level of alertness for the last three weeks, and we'll be at the same level for the next three weeks until this is over. We've seen over 36 suicide bombing incidents since the 22 of January. We don't have that window of time where we can relax. It has to be full press, full-time, knowing that we can't do it 100 percent. We can only give 100 percent effort, and that's what we're doing.

BLITZER: And the Israeli police force, as you go about trying to prevent these kinds of suicide bombings, is there anything different you're doing now as opposed to a week or two weeks ago?

KLEIMAN: Well, not one week or two weeks of course, because like I said we've seen a rash of suicide bombers, 35 suicide incidents even since January, since the 22 of January. But it is true that the situation, I mean suicide bombers have been in this country for many years, but the rate we've been seeing them have taught us a lot of things. Unfortunately we're very experienced and we've had our successes. We had a police officer who stopped a shooting attack who died, but on April 1 a young policeman, 18 years old, approached a car and it blew up. So we've had situations where we've succeeded.

Unfortunately, you cannot close down that city 100 percent. You can't hermetically close a city, and put it into a Ziploc bag. It can't be done.

BLITZER: All right. Joe Kleiman, spokesman for the Israeli police. Thank
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you for joining us.

And let us get a view from a first responder from the Palestinian side. Dr. Mustafa Bargouti is president of the Palestinian Medical Relief. He joins us live now on the phone. Dr. Bargouti, thanks for joining us. What are your major problems in dealing with the Palestinian civilian injuries from your end?

DR. MUSTAFA BARGOUTI, PALESTINIAN MEDICAL RELIEF: Many problems. The biggest problem is that the Israeli army is preventing us from reaching the injured.

During the last period of time, so many people, hundreds of people died because they were not accessed by our medical teams. Injured people were left to bleed to death. They bled to death literally, including more in the Jenin area because Israel itself admits that they did not allow a single ambulance, a single doctor to arrive and treat the people who are injured.

More than that, we are shocked -- shot at constantly. We have counted 112 attacks on our ambulances during the last 15 days by the Israeli army. I want

to remind you that up until now the Israeli army has killed 17 doctors and nurses working with different medical teams. One hundred eighty of them have been injured with high velocity bullets, and with different kinds of bullets. More than that, we are witnessing a very severe health crisis. A humanitarian crisis created by the Israeli army, which is preventing at the very moment the provision of normal care to ordinary people. Pregnant women are unable to reach hospitals to give birth.

BLITZER: Doctor...

BARGOUTI: And we have patients who need cancer treatment, and they cannot get treatment and kidney dialysis patients.

BLITZER: Dr. Bargouti, I want to read to you a statement that was released by the Israeli army, the IDF. The Israeli Defense Forces, among other things, they said this: Ambulance and medical crew are not being checked and examined thoroughly at IDF check points, and our cynically exploiting the instructions give to soldiers with an emphasis on their behavior toward a civilian population, the ill and the children. The statement goes on to say the protection given to the medical teams will cease when they take part in fighting activity in accordance with their humanitarian role. In other words what the Israeli army is suggesting is that some of your people are cooperating with terrorists.

BARGOUTI: There is no limit to Israeli lies. As I can see Israel has a very sophisticated propaganda, and unfortunately you don't get the truth because we don't have the press coverage that the Israelis have. For instance, today, the suicide bombing was shown on TV for hours while nobody has shown the fact that yesterday the Israeli Apache helicopter bombarded a civilian house in the city of Nablus.

And only an hour ago they managed to take the people out of that house.

Eight people from the same family, a father, his son, the wife of his son and three of their children, a woman who is pregnant in her eighth month were killed by an Apache helicopter. Civilians were killed, the propaganda is too sophisticated and it is covering the truth. The truth is that we are the

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victims. The truth is that Israel is presenting itself as a victim, although we all know that because of the violence is occupation. And what Sharon is doing is expanding occupation.

Sharon is expanding the cancer that has been eating the lives of both people.

To me, I think, Mr. Sharon is responsible for the death, not only of Palestinians, but also of Israelis because he's taking us into a bath of violence that's endless. And preventing medical teams from providing medical care to patients who are sick is unacceptable.

BLITZER: Dr. Bargouti, unfortunately we have to leave it right there. Dr. Mustafa Bargouti of the Palestinian Medical Relief. Thank you so much for joining us.

And in just a moment more on the road to peace. Obstacles for the secretary of state. We'll speak with our woman Andrea Koppel. She's covering the secretary's visit. She'll join us live with all the late breaking developments. Stay with us.

In comparative size, Israel is slightly smaller than New Jersey. The West Bank is slightly smaller than Delaware. The Gaza Strip is about twice the size of Washington, D.C.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back. It's a little past half past midnight here in Jerusalem. Time for another Middle East "News Alert."

Egypt's foreign minister today became the most senior Arab official to visit Yasser Arafat since Israeli forces confined him to his Ramallah headquarters. According to Egypt's Middle East news agency, the diplomat gave Arafat a message of support from the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak.

In the wake of today's bombing here in Jerusalem, Secretary of State Powell's meeting with Yasser Arafat has been postponed, at least by 24 hours. There is no immediate word if in fact that postponement could go beyond 24 hours.

The U.N. secretary-general, Kofi Annan, says it is time to send an international force into the Middle East. Annan told reporters the situation has grown so dangerous and appalling that intervention no longer can be deferred. He did not specify the nature or the composition of any international force.

A new CNN/"Time" magazine poll conducted before today's bombing indicates most Americans are only mildly optimistic about Secretary Powell's visit to this part of the world. Fifty-two percent predicted it would result in only minor progress; 46 percent of those interviewed said the Palestinians are more responsible for Middle East violence; 20 percent blame the Israelis.

Obviously, it's been a day of ups and downs here for the Secretary of State in Jerusalem. Our state department correspondent, Andrea Koppel, is covering his visit. She has been covering it since day one. She joins us now live from Jerusalem -- Andrea.

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ANDREA KOPPEL, CNN STATE DEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENT: Good evening, Wolf. After almost an absence of one year, Secretary Powell's day one back in Jerusalem was suddenly interrupted.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(voice-over): As if to illustrate the point, Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon fired on Israeli soldiers even as Powell was briefed on the volatile situation by Israeli generals.

The day had already gotten off to a bad start. Following a marathon meeting with Israel's prime minister, Powell walked out empty handed, Prime Minister Sharon defiant, refusing repeated U.S. demands to immediately withdraw Israeli troops from West Bank towns and cities.

SHARON (through translator): Israel is conducting a war against the Palestinian infrastructure of terrorism and it does hope to conclude it shortly.

KOPPEL: But with Palestinian and Arab anger over Israel's continued military occupation growing by the day and no end to this cycle of violence in sight, Powell's plan to pull both sides back from the brink hinges on cooperation.

POWELL: We do understand what terrorism is. As we have responded to terrorism, we know that Israel has a right to respond to terrorism. The question is, how do we get beyond just the response? What is the next step? How do we get past that?

KOPPEL: Within hours, Powell got an answer, but not the one he wanted. Another Palestinian suicide attack in the heart of Jerusalem had dealt another blow to Powell's mission, forcing the U.S. to put Powell's meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on hold.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BLITZER: And, Andrea Koppel, there are suggestions as you well know that the decision by the secretary of state to postpone for 24 hours this meeting with Yasser Arafat is the direct result of that terrorist bombing, the suicide bombing in Jerusalem earlier today. What are you hearing?

KOPPEL: This was a very difficult decision for the Bush team, for Powell's aides and for the secretary himself. They had intended over the strong

objections of Israel's prime minister to go forward with this meeting tomorrow, Wolf. They have been hearing for the last weekend, every Arab country that they visited that Powell had to show the world, had to prove to the international community that Israel's attempts to isolate Arafat, to make him irrelevant had not worked, and that that was really a pre-requisite for Arab cooperation in trying to break this deadlock right now.

So, this was not a decision that came easy to the Bush team. But they felt that in light of the terrorist attack and they also put a demand before, a new demand before Yasser Arafat to publicly condemn the terrorist attack. And when he didn't do that, they felt they had no choice but to delay the meeting by at least 24 hours, hoping that between now and Sunday, Yasser Arafat will come out and make these statements, Wolf.

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BLITZER: So, Andrea, there is still no definite decision that there will in fact be a meeting on Sunday. That remains up in the air, is that right?

KOPPEL: It absolutely does, Wolf. They're still waiting to see if Yasser Arafat will come out and condemn this terrorist attack. They feel that in light of what happened today, it would be really unseemly for Secretary Powell to travel to Ramallah to meet with Yasser Arafat.

BLITZER: Andrea Koppel reporting live from Jerusalem, thank you very much for that update. And I know Andrea will be covering all of these latebreaking developments in the next hours and days. Thanks, Andrea.

In just a moment, we will check the other news of the day, including the future of a cardinal in Boston.

Also, new allegations of cruelty to the first Taliban American.

And a conversation with Donald Rumsfeld on the challenge of conducting the war against terror.

Also, the painful pictures of today's attack in Jerusalem. But first, our "News Quiz."

Following the 1973 war between Israel and Syria, how many days did Secretary of State Henry Kissinger travel non-stop, conducting the now famous "shuttle diplomacy" negotiations? Was it 10, 18, 26 or 34. The answer coming up.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back on this day of more terror here in Jerusalem. There are other developments back in the United States. Let's get a quick check of all of those developments. Here's CNN's Fredricka Whitfield with our "News Alert."

FREDRICKA WHITFIELD, CNN ANCHOR: Thanks, Wolf. Dozens have been killed in the latest earthquake in Afghanistan. It's in the same region hit by a massive earthquake last month. Officials say three villages in the northern part of the country were devastated by today's quake which had a magnitude of 5.8.

U.S. special forces troops posed for a picture with a blindfolded John Walker Lindh after his capture in Afghanistan. The Pentagon found the snapshot on a defense department computer and it is not amused. One official says taking the picture was just plain stupid, but Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld says he has not ordered any investigation. Rumsfeld appears tonight on CNN's "LARRY KING LIVE." He talks about the challenges of fighting terror in a free society.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP, "LARRY KING LIVE")

DONALD RUMSFELD, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE: Free countries have a wonderful advantage, that the energy and vitality that comes from freedom and opportunity is just a great advantage. And as a result, countries that have free political institutions and free economic institutions tend to be the most successful countries on the face of the earth.

They also have a disadvantage. Because we are free, we want an open society

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and we don't want to spend our time living in basements, and we don't want to spend our time going around carrying weapons and looking around the corner to see if someone is going to throw a hand grenade or blow up the place.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WHITFIELD: You can see the full interview with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld on CNN's "LARRY KING LIVE" tonight at 9:00 Eastern.

Boston's beleaguered Cardinal Bernard Law says he will remain on the job.

Critics have called for Law's resignation, citing allegations he tried to cover up reported sexual abuse cases involving priests. But in a letter to priests in the Boston archdiocese, the cardinal rejected calls for his departure and said he will continue to serve the Boston archdiocese with, in his words, every fiber of my being.

When we come back, Wolf Blitzer returns with the pictures that tell a horror story.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Earlier we asked, how many days did Secretary of State Henry Kissinger travel non-stop conducting the now famous "shuttle diplomacy" negotiations? Kissinger traveled 34 days non-stop to broker a disengagement of forces agreement between Syria and Israel in 1974.

Today's picture of the day is one that's become all too familiar to Israelis.

Normal everyday patterns of life shattered by an explosion, the wail of sirens.

The remarkable developments, the agony emerges as our picture of the day.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

(SIRENS)

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BLITZER: Terror in this holiest of cities.

Let's go to New York and get a preview of "LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE." That begins right at the top of the hour -- Lou.

LOU DOBBS, CNN ANCHOR: Wolf, thank you very much.

Coming up, the lingering effect of that suicide bomb attack today in Jerusalem. The latest violence postponing Colin Powell's meeting with Yasser Arafat and further delaying any prospect for peace. We'll be going live to Jerusalem, of course, to the White House for the very latest.

In Venezuela, the overthrow of the government there means a big impact on the world oil market. We will have a special report for you on the political changes and what they mean for global energy prices.

And the markets today bounce back from yesterday's sell-off. We will have our weekly look behind the numbers on Wall Street. All of that, a lot more,

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Michael Moore, in point of fact, and his book "Stupid White Men." We will be talking about that with that at the top of the hour. Please join us. Now back to Wolf Blitzer.

BLITZER: Thank you very much, Lou.

And our poll is about to close. You only have a couple minutes left to vote.

Here is our question of the day. The results of our poll, should Colin Powell still meet with Yasser Arafat? That story plus what some of you believe about Yasser Arafat and Ariel Sharon. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BLITZER: Welcome back.

Time now for the results of our Web question of the day, should Colin Powell meet with Yasser Arafat? Look at these numbers; 50 percent say yes, 50 percent

say no. A reminder, this poll is not scientific.

Time now to get some feedback from you. Ann writes this: "The Palestinian violence skyrocketed when Ariel Sharon entered office. The only solution for peace is for the Israelis to move settlers out of the West Bank. Since this will never happen while Sharon is in power, we can expect a very bloody, long-term guerrilla war.

Raquel asks: "Where is the Palestinian leader's effort to stop the bombings? They have time to speak to the media. Why can't they find time to speak to their own people?"

That's all the time we have for this program. Remember, 8:00 tonight, Bill Hemmer with a live report, "LIVE FROM JERUSALEM", 8:00 p.m. Eastern, 5:00 on the West Coast. And this special note, I'll be back tomorrow, 4:00 p.m. Eastern for a special edition of WOLF BLITZER REPORTS.

Until then, thanks very much for watching. I'm Wolf Blitzer in Jerusalem.

"LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE" begins right now. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT www.fdch.com

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Fox News Network

SHOW: FOX ON THE RECORD WITH GRETA VAN SUSTEREN (22:29)

April 11, 2002 Thursday

Transcript # 041103cb.260

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 1454 words

HEADLINE: On The Record

Political Headlines

GUESTS: Zalman Shoval, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**

BYLINE: Greta Van Susteren, Steve Harrigan

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

VAN SUSTEREN: Welcome back. I'm Greta Van Susteren, and this is ON THE RECORD. Tonight, Mideast turmoil at a crossroads. Secretary of State Colin Powell is in Israel on what some call a mission impossible.

Back at home, in the White House tonight are reports that President Bush's inner circle is doubting Sharon's commitment to peace.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ARI FLEISCHER, WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN: The president believes that Ariel Sharon is a man of peace.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

VAN SUSTEREN: One of Sharon's top lieutenants joins me here in studio in a moment. But, first, let's get the very latest on Powell's mission from Steve

Harrigan who is in the West Bank town of Ramallah -- Steve.

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STEVE HARRIGAN, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Greta Colin Powell is in Jerusalem and in just a few hours time he is expected to start meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. And then on Saturday, if it comes off, the controversial visit here to Ramallah to meet with Yasser Arafat who has been holed up in his compound here, surrounded by Israeli tanks for the past two weeks.

Now, while talks are set to begin about a possible cease-fire, no sign of that cease-fire in the West Bank town of Hebron where, that's where a Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up on Thursday morning. Apparently the explosives strapped to the man's body went off early as he was standing near a taxi stand. He injured just a few bystanders. but parts of his body were found up to 100 yards away.

Now, there are signs that the fighting is waning in several hotspots around the West Bank. In the city of Jenin where the fighting was heaviest, 36 Palestinian gunmen turned themselves over Thursday morning. They surrendered to Israeli forces apparently after running out of ammunition. Greta, back to you.

VAN SUSTEREN: Steve, thank you.

Here with me in Washington is a diplomatic adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Zalman Shoval, who is also former Israeli ambassador to the U.S. Welcome, Ambassador.

ZALMAN SHOVAL, ADVISER TO PRIME MINISTER OF ISRAEL: Hi, Greta.

VAN SUSTEREN: Ambassador, does Israel want the help of the United States?

Yes, I think we need the help of the United States continuously. And we are both being in the same fight against terrorism.

VAN SUSTEREN: Then why is it -- I'm curious about this -- President Bush has asked Ariel Sharon to withdraw from the Palestinian areas and he has declined to do so?

SHOVAL: Well, Ariel Sharon, like any democratically elected prime minister, has a duty to his own people. His own people have been slaughtered, murdered on a daily basis almost, by suicide bombers. Yesterday, we saw another thing like that in Haifa.

And although the ultimate goals of the United States and Israel are the same, to fight the worldwide scourge of terror and all these things with regards to the longer-range goals of the United States, what should the Israeli government do, say, "OK, our people are being killed, we don't do anything."

This is a real problem, by the way. I think President Bush and the administration understand that problem.

VAN SUSTEREN: Here is the thing that's sort of curious to me. Night after night, I say the same thing. Night after night, I listen to both sides. And I know the United States, and I know President Bush is trying to make it better there. I know the former administration did as well.

We've got Ariel Sharon and we've got Arafat, who I am not convinced are

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acting as leaders to their own people. And this has been going on for 20 years that these two men seem to be feuding. And you see death and destruction. You hear horrible stories coming out of the Middle East. No one is doing well there.

SHOVAL: This has nothing to do with two people. We had another prime minister just a year ago, Mr. Barak, different party. The Intifada started during his reign, during his prime ministership. There is a concerted effort of terror by Yasser Arafat against the state of Israel and against the Jewish people.

VAN SUSTEREN: And I don't disagree that there has been terror.

SHOVAL: By the way, I don't think President Bush disagrees with that because he said the other day Arafat has betrayed the confidence, the future, of his own people. I think President Bush exactly shares our view strategically, ideologically, but there are differences of opinion on tactics.

VAN SUSTEREN: When I hear stories, though, coming out of Israel about the way the Palestinians are suffering -- no water, can't get to the hospitals in ambulances, they're dying because they can't get past the Israelis, and the checkpoints are so humiliating to the Palestinians, I mean, what do you think when you hear that?

SHOVAL: Greta, do you know the story about the guy who murdered his parents and asked for pity from the judge because he's an orphan? We didn't start this. We didn't start this. We had an Oslo agreement. We had the Wye River agreement. Israeli governments were willing to hand over to Arafat 97 percent of the territories plus three percent of Israel plus most of east Jerusalem. The answer was terrorism.

VAN SUSTEREN: And, Ambassador, you know what? I agree with you that you didn't start this, of course. Who can forget the massacre on Passover just a few weeks ago.

SHOVAL: Exactly. Exactly.

VAN SUSTEREN: Ambassador, thank you for joining us. Now for the other side. Here in Washington is **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, chief Palestinian representative to the U.S. and PLO spokesman. Sir, does Israel have the right to exist?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PLO SPOKESMAN: Of course it does. But Israel does not have the right to occupy the Palestinian territories and subjugate 3.5 million people, steal their land, build Jewish settlements, and humiliate them.

VAN SUSTEREN: Do you believe that suicide bombers sending a civilian, whether it's a young woman or a young kid or an adult man, into any area where there are civilian Israelis, do you think that a successful way to persuade the Israelis to get out of those areas?

RAHMAN: No. We never said that. But...

VAN SUSTEREN: That's what's happening. The problem is that terrorism seems to be the...

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RAHMAN: No, I think the focus, Greta, is on this issue. But you should focus on the suffering of the Palestinian people because...

VAN SUSTEREN: I think they are suffering. And, sir, I think they are suffering. But the problem is that the suffering goes on on both sides. And we sit and watch it night after night.

RAHMAN: Yes. But you have a constant state of terror that is going on, perpetuated by Israel against the Palestinians for the last 36 years. Mr. Shoval is not telling the truth when he said, "We did not start it." Of course they started it. They moved 300,000 Jewish extremists, Jewish Talibans, into the Palestinian territories. And now they want...

VAN SUSTEREN: Do you...

RAHMAN: ... and they want now...

VAN SUSTEREN: ... do you want U.S. help? Do you want U.S. help? I asked the ambassador. Do you want...

RAHMAN: Of course.

VAN SUSTEREN: ... what do you want from the U.S.? What do you want us to do?

RAHMAN: We want Israel to respect the decision of the Security Council of the United Nations, halt its aggression and withdraw its troops, respect...

VAN SUSTEREN: What do you want from the U.S., though? I'll tell you, we've spent an awful lot of money. We've sent the secretary of state over there. We've

spent a lot of time. What can we do?

RAHMAN: If you just let me finish what I'm saying, I will tell you what we want from the United States. We want the United States to ensure that Israel respects the resolutions of the Security Council and the words of President Bush.

Second, we want the United States to endorse an international force to come and separate us from the Israelis because we need Israel to withdraw from our territories. And we are ready to accept international monitors to see who is doing what.

But as long as Israel continues to build Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories, subjugate 3.5 million Palestinians, this is a prescription for a future conflict between us and Israel. This is in the hands of Israel.

VAN SUSTEREN: And I just want to say to you, sir, that if we can get peace there, that certainly is I think in the best interests of everyone. **Hasan Abdel Rahman...**

RAHMAN: Absolutely right. I agree with you.

VAN SUSTEREN: ... all right, sir. Thank you for joining me.

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Up next, Ohio Congressman James Traficant guilty on all charges, including racketeering. Does he automatically lose his congressional seat, and how much prison time he is looking at? And later, our "After the Verdict" series continues.

(NEWSBREAK)

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CNN

SHOW: CNN LIVE EVENT/SPECIAL 11:01

April 10, 2002 Wednesday

Transcript # 041002CN.V54

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 8024 words

HEADLINE: Former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Addresses Congress

GUESTS: Hasan Abdel Rahman

BYLINE: Daryn Kagan, Leon Harris, William Schneider, John Vause, Andrea Koppel

HIGHLIGHT:

Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses the U.S. Congress on the escalating Mideast crisis. Netanyahu's talk with lawmakers is being billed as a major address.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

DARYN KAGAN, CNN ANCHOR: We are waiting to hear live this hour from the former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He is on Capitol Hill today,

standing in for the current prime minister, Ariel Sharon. Netanyahu's talk with lawmakers is being billed as a major address. You will see it live when it happens.

And to give us an idea of what he might have to say, I want to peek in on something that Benjamin Netanyahu said earlier today. He appeared on CNN a few hours ago, AMERICAN MORNING with Paula Zahn. And I thought we had that sound of your. Apparently, we don't.

Let's move on to Bill Schneider standing by, our senior political analysts, also in Washington D.C.

Bill, good morning.

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WILLIAM SCHNEIDER, CNN CORRESPONDENT: I am here.

KAGAN: Yes, you are. You know, we can always rely on you, that's the thing, and we do appreciate that. More reliable than videotapes, or computers or whatever it is that we're using these days.

I want to look at who is speaking today, and that is Benjamin Netanyahu.

This is a man who I think has made it pretty plain he would like to have the prime minister's job once again.

SCHNEIDER: Yes.

KAGAN: Interesting he's here as an envoy of the prime minister's government.

SCHNEIDER: That's right. He is a member of Mr. -- Prime Minister Sharon's party. But it's widely considered to be a rival for power that after Sharon, Bibi Netanyahu -- his nickname is Bibi. His real name is Benjamin, Benjamin (ph) in Hebrew. It's Not a secret that he would like the prime minister's job once again. He held it, and then -- for a couple of yea, and then I think 1996...

KAGAN: '96-'99.

SCHNEIDER: '99, and then he was defeated by Ehud Barak, you remember, who negotiated with Mr. Arafat and President Clinton just before Clinton left office.

Well, Netanyahu didn't run when Sharon was elected over Barak in 2001, but he's clearly interested in running another time. This is very interesting, because it's rare for a former prime minister to be invited to speak. And my understanding is that all members of the Senate have been invited to hear Mr. Netanyahu's remarks this morning.

KAGAN: Well, guess what, through the magic of television and computers, we have that soundbite ready to go, so let's give a glimpse of what Mr. Netanyahu might have to say as he spoke earlier today on AMERICAN MORNING.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, FMR. ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER: It is Important to say that the president talked about the beginning of a withdrawal, and Israel has begun that. But I think the important thing is that we have to complete the job.

You've been cleaning up a terrorist- infested country, Afghanistan, for seven months. It's not going to take us seven months or seven weeks, but we have hardly been there seven days, and if we leave, a lot of malignant cancer, these goons fighting terrorists. Forget about their well-heeled spokesman here, these people who emulate 10-year-old, 15-year-old children in order to bomb and kill as many Israelis as possible, civilian and soldiers alike. If we leave this malignancy, this cancer in place, then it will grow. It will come back like the most virulent cancer that come back at all of us with even greatest devastation.

Let us finish the job.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

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KAGAN: OK, a couple of points out of that, Bill. Making the analogy once again of the U.S. fight against terrorism, the U.S. going to Afghanistan in light of 9-11, and also talking about the timetable. President Bush has made it very plain it is time for the Israelis to withdraw from the areas that they now occupied.

SCHNEIDER: That's right. Last Thursday, when President Bush came out into the Rose Garden, he appeared to shift policy. He had been siding completely with Israel, or virtually completely with Israel, saying that we are backing Israel in this fight. And then he seemed to back away and say it was time for Israel to at least begin withdrawal. And then a couple of days later, he said the withdrawal must begin without delay.

The president appeared frustrated with Israel, but his policy shifted. The Israelis weren't too happy with that. And it's interesting that Mr. Netanyahu is appearing before Congress, because there's a long history in the Israeli-American relationship that every president of either party, whether it's Carter, or Reagan, or Clinton or Bush, every president has certain frictions with Israel. But Congress has always been very staunchly supportive of Israel. And I believe Israel believes that they can really on Congress for support, and I think that's why Mr. Netanyahu is there today.

KAGAN: As we look ahead to the speech, I don't think it would be a huge gap or a huge guess to say this will be a hard-liner speech. I mean, Benjamin Netanyahu is a hawk.

SCHNEIDER: He's a hawk. He's just as much, if not more of a hawk, than the Prime Minister Sharon. But the point that he's making, particularly to an American audience, American senators is, it's your fight too. We are doing in the war with the Palestinians the same thing you are doing in Afghanistan. We are going after terrorists for the same reason that President Bush articulated after September 11th. We are all on the same fight in the fight. And what he's pleading with the Americans to let them complete the job. That's what he just said. We want to finish the job. Don't rush us out of there. The big issue, of course, is Yasser Arafat.

The president has condemned him for not taking enough action against the terrorists. But he's drawn just short of condemning Arafat specifically as a terrorist and someone who has to be removed from power, because he's the only one that America feels that will -- on the Palestinian side that we or the Israelis can deal with. The Israelis don't seem to agree with that, and that's a point of difference between the two countries.

KAGAN: All right, we'll have you stand by and watch the speech with us. Once again, we're expecting Benjamin Netanyahu to speak from the Dirksen office building in Washington D.C. And you will see those comments live when they begin.

LEON HARRIS, CNN ANCHOR: In the meantime, now, we've got late word that Israel is going to be pulling its forces back from Yasser Arafat's compound in Ramallah, at least temporarily, and that's according to an Israeli government source. The move will allow Secretary of State Colin Powell to get inside that compound for a meeting with Arafat.

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CNN's John Vause checks in now. He's got the latest for us from Jerusalem. Hello, John.

JOHN VAUSE, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Yes, hi, Leon.

Well, word came through that I think the Israelis will allow that meeting to take place on Saturday at Yasser Arafat's compound there. But also earlier,

there was in fact a meeting between the Palestinian leader and a number of aides. Michael Holmes is standing by to give us a few more details about that. But we also have some more information coming from the Jenin refugee camp in the north of the West Bank. What we understand now is that the fighting there is pretty much over, and that they're allowing media on the ground to get into this cam to see for themselves the result of some fairly fierce fighting there between the Palestinians and the Israeli Defense Force. We understand that at least 150 Palestinians have been killed. That coming from Israeli sources. The Palestinians saying many, many more have been killed on the ground there. We should get some verification within the next couple of hours.

We know that 13 Israeli soldiers were killed there in what the Israeli soldiers said was an ambush yesterday. As an interesting note, or an important note to say, is that that's been the biggest hit that the Israelis have taken during this entire 18-month uprising. The biggest hit they took in one day, 13 soldiers killed in that ambush.

We also know that in Jenin, there have been reports from Palestinians that there are just people being kept in their houses for days with no food, or water, or electricity, that they're basically -- the international aid agencies and the U.N. are now asking the Israelis to allow those people to have access basic services.

We also had today a suicide bombing, another one. This is the first one in 10 days. The Israelis had pointed that Operation Defensive Shield is proof that those incursions on the West Bank had, in fact, been working. But this morning came word that it had not been as effective as the Israelis had hoped.

A bus traveling to Jerusalem from Haifa. A suicide bomber onboard that bus detonated a belt of explosives shortly after he got on that bus, eight people killed, another 14 wounded. The people who were near the scene say the base basically was raised feet from the road, and pieces of debris went flying across the freeway. The Islamic militant group Hamas claimed responsibility, and in an ominous sign, they warned there will be more suicide bombings while the Israeli incursions take place, and that operation defensive shield shows no sign of letting up -- Leon.

HARRIS: John, let me ask you to do some interpretation work for us. As you may know, Secretary of State Colin Powell moved up his visit there to Jerusalem before he meets with Yasser Arafat by about half a day or so. And some on the outside are looking at that as a rather positive sign.

Any word at all about how this is being interpreted there in Jerusalem?

VAUSE: Well, we have the word from the Israeli prime minister, who says that

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a meeting with Yasser Arafat with Colin Powell would be a fatal mistake. They say that Yasser Arafat is basically irrelevant in this equation. They would prefer that the secretary of state does not meet with Yasser Arafat. However, that meeting will go ahead at assistance it seems of the secretary of state. It seems as if the reaction more is coming from the Arab world. They are pleased that Colin Powell will arrive in the area, if not that much sooner than he originally planned. It's only about 12 hours earlier. He was going to be here Friday. He's now coming here in Thursday night. He had come from a lot of criticism for not coming to Jerusalem first, many from Arab leaders, but also the Palestinians themselves.

They wondered if there could be anything more crucial on the agenda rather than solving this or trying to get a cease-fire here on the ground between the Palestinian and the Israelis. What they are saying is surely there is nothing more urgent that you have to attend to in those other countries, in Egypt, and

in Spain, where he stopped along the way.

He's cutting short, I believe, a trip in Jordan to make his way here sooner, to get on the ground about 12 hours ahead of schedule. As far as the Israelis go, they're basically seeing any meeting with Yasser Arafat as something they certainly don't view as a positive -- Leon.

HARRIS: John, let me ask you again about the humanitarian angle there. That really has been getting a lot of attention in the wider world community.

Actually, we want to wrap that up, John, because we now just see Benjamin Netanyahu entering into the Dirksen Senate building. You see him there taking the -- you saw him momentarily ago at the podium. That is Senator Jon Kyl there now at the podium. He's about to introduce Benjamin Netanyahu. He is going to be speaking in front of this group of senators in Washington.

And doing so, as Ariel Sharon's emissary, or his envoy, here this morning, and we expect him to -- we've been told what he will be saying here is to be considered a major address, not much more guidance given as to what that exactly means, but with him coming here speaking on behalf of Ariel Sharon, it's quite possible that he is going to have something to say that may have on the talks that Secretary of State Colin Powell is going to be having in the coming hours in Israel, as well as in Ramallah with Yasser Arafat.

We will go back to this scene here any moment now, as soon as Benjamin Netanyahu takes the podium.

KAGAN: You see Senator Kyl and Senator Lieberman. So there might be a couple of rounds of introductions before we get to Benjamin Netanyahu. But when he does speak, you will see that live here on CNN.

Meanwhile, Secretary of State Colin Powell stopping by in Madrid, as he makes his to the Mideast.

Let's check with our Andrea Koppel who is travelling with the secretary of state.

Andrea, hello.

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ANDREA KOPPEL, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Hello, Daryn.

Well, it was a welcome show of solidarity for Secretary Powell here in Madrid. He had just come off several meeting within the Arab world where he got a warm reception but a cold shoulder as far as trying to get the Arab world to use their influence with Yasser Arafat. But here in Madrid, the leaders not only of your the European Union, but of the United Nations, represented by Kofi Annan and Russia, all threw the support and weight of their government behind Secretary Powell's admittedly extremely difficult Mideast peacekeeping mission, all of them speaking out really in an evenhanded way against both Israel's continued incursion into West Bank towns and cities, and also for the lack of any kind of movement on the part of Yasser Arafat to condemn acts of terrorism. Secretary of State Powell speaking for the group said in a nutshell, there is no such thing as an acceptable amount of violence.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

COLIN POWELL, SECY. OF STATE: Violence of whatever form, whether one would call it an act of terrorism or an act of resistance at this point is counterproductive. It does not lead to the vision that the Palestinian people have of the state where they can live side by side in peace with Israel. What we have to see now is an end to the violence, with whatever title you want to give to that violence, it's violence nonetheless, and it's totally destabilizing the region, and it is destroying that vision.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KOPPEL: Now the leaders here today in Madrid also acknowledge that they are

facing a threefold crisis, not only an increase in the Israeli-Palestinian fighting, but also a mounting humanitarian crisis in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as an increase of fighting on Israel's northern boarder, what's known now as the opening of a second front. Kofi Annan, the U.N. secretary-general, called for an immediate end to any cross boarder shelling and cross-border incursions.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KOFFI ANNAN, U.N. SECY. OF GENERAL: We express our great concern about the most recent attacks from Lebanon across the U.N. determined blue line. The quartet calls on all parties to respect the blue line to halt attacks and show the utmost restraint. The conflict should not be allowed to spread and threaten regional security and stability.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KOPPEL: Now the international community, many people here today representing their government say that they have been in touch both with the Syrians and with the Iranians, both of whom...

KAGAN: Andrea, I'm sorry, I have to apologize. We need to interrupt you because Benjamin Netanyahu has begun to speak on Capitol Hill.

Let's go ahead and listen in to the former Israeli prime minister.

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(JOINED IN PROGRESS)

NETANYAHU: It is for the sake of our common values that I have come here today. I have come here to voice what I believe is an urgently needed reminder, that the war on terror can be won with clarity and courage, or lost with confusion and vacillation.

Seven months ago, on a clear day in this capital of freedom, I was given this opportunity to address you, the guardians of liberty, and I will never forget that day, a day when words that will echo for ages pierce the conscious of the free world. These were words that lifted the spirits of an American nation that had been savagely attacked by evil, words that looked at evil straight in the eye and boldly declared that it would be utterly destroyed, word that chartered a bold course for victory.

Now, these words were not mine. They were the words of the president of the United States. In an historic speech to the e world that September, and with determined action in the crucial months that followed, President Bush and his administration outlined a vision that had the moral and strategic clarity necessary to win the war on terror.

The moral clarity emanated from an ironclad definition of terror and from an impregnable moral truth. Terrorism was understood to be the deliberate targeting of civilians in order to achieve political ends, and it was always unjustifiable. With a few powerful words, President Bush said all that was needed to be said. Terrorism, he said, is never, ever justified.

And the strategic clarity emanated from the recognition that international terrorism depends on support of sovereign states, and that fighting it demands that these regimes be either deterred or dismantled.

In one clear sentence, president Bush expressed this principle. He said no distinction will be made between the terrorists and the regimes that harbor them. This moral and strategic clarity was applied with devastating force to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan that supported Al Qaeda terrorism. No false moral equivalent was drawn between the thousands of Afghan civilians who were the unintentional and unfortunate casualties of America's just war, and the thousands of Americans civilian deliberately murdered on September 11th. No strategic confusion led America to pursue Al Qaeda terrorism, while

leaving the Taliban regime in place. Soon after the war began, the American victory over the forces of terror in Afghanistan brought to light the third principle in this war on terror, namely the imperative for victory, the understanding that the best way to defeat terror is to defeat it. Now, I know that sounds to be totalist and it must have seemed at first to be a trite observation. It wasn't fully understood.

But contrary to popular belief, the motivating force behind terror is not desperation nor destitution. It is, in fact, hope, the hope of terrorist systematically brainwashed by the ideologues that brainwash them that their savagery will break the will of their enemies and help them achieve their objectives.

Now if you defeat this hope, you defeat terrorism. Convince terrorists,

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convince their sponsors and their potential new recruits that terrorism will be thoroughly uprooted and severely punished, and you will stop terrorism in its tracks.

By adhering to these three principles, moral clarity, strategic clarity and the imperative for victory, the forces of freedom led by America are well under way to victory against terror from Afghanistan. That is only the first step in dismantling the global terror network. The other terrorist regimes must now be dealt with rapidly in similar fashion.

Yet, today, just seven months into the war, it is far from certain that this will be done. Faced with the quintessential terrorist regime of our time, a regime that both harbors and perpetrates terror on an unimaginable scale, the free world is muddling its principles, losing its nerve, and thereby endangering the successful prosecution of this war.

The question many in my country are now asking is this, will America apply its principles consistently and win the war, or will it selectively abandon these principles and thereby risk losing the war? My countrymen ask this question, because they believe that terrorism is an indivisible evil that must be fought indivisibly. They believe that if more clarity is obfuscated, that if you allow one part of the terror network to survive, much less be rewarded for its crimes, then the forces of terror will regroup and rise again.

Until last week, I was absolutely certain that the United States would adhere to its principles and lead the free world to a decisive victory. Today, I too have my concerns. I am concerned that when it comes to terror directed against Israel, the moral and strategic clarity that is so crucial for victory is being lost. I'm concerned that the imperative of defeating terror everywhere is being ignored when the main engine of Palestinian terror is allowed to remain intact. I'm concerned that the state of Israel that has for decades bravely manned the front lines against terror is being pressed to back down just when it is on the verge of uprooting Palestinian terror.

These concerns first surfaced with the appearance of a reprehensible moral symmetry that equates Israel, a democracy that is defending itself against terror, with the Palestinian dictatorship that is perpetrating it. The deliberate targeting of Israeli civilians has been shamefully equated with the unintentional loss of Palestinian lives that is tragic but unavoidable consequence of legitimate warfare.

Worse, since Palestinian terrorist both deliberately target civilians and deliberately hide behind civilians, Israel is cast as the guilty party because more Palestinian have been killed by Arafat's terrorist war than Israelis have been killed.

No one of course would dare suggest that the United States was the guilty

party in World War II, because German casualties, which by the way included millions of civilians, were 20 times higher than American casualty. So, too, only a twisted and corrupt logic would paint American and Britain as the aggressor in the Cold War, because Afghan casualties are reported by some -- I don't have conclusive figures -- to have well exceeded the death toll of September 11th.

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The responsibility for civilian deaths in the U.S. on September 11th and in America's subsequent military action lies squarely with the Taliban's chief Mullah Omar and with Osama bin Laden. And similarly, the responsibility for civilian deaths in Israel and in Israel's subsequent military action in Palestinian-controlled areas lies squarely with Yasser Arafat, who has actually the dubious distinction of being the world's only terrorist chieftain who harbors and perpetrates terrorism.

Now my concern was sparked not only by this specious allegation of blame for civilian casualties. It deepened when, incredibly, Israel was asked to stop fighting terror and return to a negotiating table with regime that is committed to the destruction of the Jewish state and openly embraces terror.

Yasser Arafat brazenly pursues an ideology of pocide. I think I coined this phrase "pocide," which is the destruction of a state, and he meticulously pursues by promoting a cult of suicide. And with total control of the media, the schools, the ghoulis kindergarten camps for children that glorifies suicide martyrism. For God's sake, this is a man who signs the checks for the explosives for the suicide bombs. Arafat's dictatorship has indoctrinated a generation of Palestinian in a culture of death, producing waves of human bombs that massacre Jews in buses, discos, supermarkets, pizza shops, cafes, everywhere and anywhere.

Israel has not experienced a terrorist attack on the scale that you have witnessed on that horrific day in September. That unprecedented act of barbarism will never be forgotten. It, too, will live in infamy. In my judgment it will surpass in infamy the other great attack on America.

But in the last 18 months, Israel's six million citizens have buried over 400 victims of terrorist, a per capita toll equal to half a dozen September 11th.

This daily, indeed hourly carnage is also unprecedented, even in terrorism's long and bloody history, yet at the very moment when support for Israel's war against terror should be stronger than ever. My nation is being asked to stop fighting.

Though, we are assured by friends we have the right to defend ourselves, we are effectively asked to suspend, not to exercise that right. But our friends should have no illusions, with or without international support, the government of Israel must fight not only to defend its people and to restore a dangerously eroded deterrence to secure the Jewish state, but also to ensure that the free world wins the war against terror in this pivotal arena in the heart of the Middle East.

I think that Israel must now do three things. First, it must dismantle Arafat's terrorist regime and expel Arafat from the region. As long as the engineer of Palestinian terror remains in the territories, terrorism will not stop and the promise of peace will never be realized.

Second, Israel must clean out the terrorist, the weapons, the explosives from all the Palestinian-controlled areas. We have discovered just in Jenin, about 1,400 Kalashnikov rifles, 12 laboratories for explosives -- for TNT explosives, and hundreds, hundreds of front-line terrorists.

No place, whether it is a refugee camp in Gaza or an office in Ramallah, can

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be allowed to remain a haven for terrorists.

And third, Israel must establish physical barriers separating the main Palestinian population centers from Israel's towns and its cities, and this will prevent any residual terrorists from reaching Israel. We have such a barrier around Gaza, in the form of a fence. And hardly any -- not even a single terrorist bomber has crossed from Gaza in recent months.

Done together, these three measures will dramatically reduce terrorism, they will bring security to the people of Israel, and they will restore stability to the region.

Last week, the government of Israel began to take the second of these vital steps. Rather than bomb Palestinian populated cities and towns from the air, an operation that would have claimed thousands of civilian casualties. The Israeli army is taking on a much greater risk by using ground forces that painstakingly make their way through the hornet's nest of Palestinian terror.

But instead of praising Israel for seeking to minimize civilian casualties through careful and deliberate action, most of the world's governments shamelessly condemn it. For seven months, many of these governments have rightly supported the war against Afghan terror. Yet, after only seven days, their patience for Israel's war against terror has run out.

Now the explanations that are offered for this double standard are not convincing. Actually, it's a triple standard. There's a standard for the dictatorships in the world. There's a standard for the democracies and there's still a third standard for Israel. But none of the explanations for this double or triple standard are convincing. First it is said that the war on terror is different, because a political process exists that can restore security and advanced peace. This is simply not so.

There can never be a political solution for terror. There can never be a political solution for terror, for a simple reason: The grievance of terrorists can never be addressed through political concessions. If you offer terrorists political concessions, you encourage them to engage in more terror, which is more or less the process that Israel just went through. It offered Arafat's terror enormous concessions under the previous prime minister and the terror catapulted to impossible heights.

There is no political solution to terror. You have to defeat terror militarily in order to have a political process. Yasser Arafat's terrorist regime must be toppled, not forced.

And the Oslo agreements, unfortunately, are dead. Arafat killed them. He tore it to shreds, soaked it in Jewish blood, by violating every single one of the provisions of Oslo, including the two core commitments he made, to recognize a state of Israel, and to permanently renounce terrorism.

With such a regime, with such a failure of leadership, no political process is possible. In fact, a political process can only begin when the terrorist regime is dismantled.

Second, it is said that waging war on Palestinian terror today will

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destabilize the region and cripple the imminent war against Saddam Hussein.

This concern my friends is also misplaced. First, I must state clearly that the need to topple Saddam is paramount. I think the commitment of America and Britain to dismantle this terrorist dictatorship before it obtains atomic bombs, before it obtains nuclear weapons, deserves the unconditional support of all sane governments and all sane people around the world.

But contrary to conventional wisdom, what has destabilized the region is not Israeli action against Palestinian terror, but rather the constant pressure exerted on Israel to show restraint. It is precisely the exceptional restraint shown by Israel for over a year and a half that has unwittingly emboldened its enemies and inadvertently increased the threat of a wider conflict. If the Israel restraint were to continue, the many thousands that are now clamoring for war in Arab capitals will turn into millions, and an avoidable war will become inevitable. Half measures against terrorists will leave their grievances intact, fueled by the hope of future victory. Full measures may not redress these grievance, but it will convince them that the pursuit of terror will bring certain defeat.

America must now show that it will not heed the international call to stop Israel from exercising its right to self defense. For if the world begins to believe that America may deviate from its principles, then terrorists regimes that might have otherwise been deterred, will not be deterred. Those that might have crumbled under the weight of American resolve will not crumble. As a result, winning the war against terror will prove far more difficult and perhaps impossible.

I must tell you that the charge that Israel, of all countries, is hindering the war against Saddam is woefully unjust, because I think that my country, more than any other, has done more to make victory over Saddam possible. 21 years ago, Prime Minister Menachem Begin sent the Israeli Air Force on a pre-dawn raid hundreds of miles away, on one of the boldest military missions in our nation's history. When our pilots returned, we had successfully destroyed Saddam's atomic bomb factory, and crippled his capacity to build nuclear weapons. Israel was safer, and so was the world. But rather than thanking us for safeguarding freedom, the entire world condemned us.

Ten years later, when American troops expelled Iraqi forces in the Gulf War, then Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney expressed a debt of gratitude to Israel for the bold and determined action a decade earlier that had made victory possible.

Indeed, I'm confident that in time, those who would question Israel's actions now, will understand that rooting out Palestinian terror today will also make Israel and the world safer tomorrow, and There is a reason why I'm saying this. If we do not shut down the terror factories that Arafat is hosting, those terror factories that are producing human bombs, it is only a matter of time before suicide bombers will terrorize your cities here in America.

If not destroyed, this madness will strike in your buses, in your supermarkets, in your pizza parlors, in your cafes. Eventually, it is not impossible that those human bombs will supplement their murderous force with suitcases equipped with devices of mass des (ph) that could make the horrors of September 11 seem pale by comparison. Arafat pioneered the art of airline

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CNN LIVE EVENT/SPECIAL 11:01 April 10, 2002 Wednesday hijacking. It was used against us, and very quickly spread to the entire world. It took us 20 years to put this demon back in the box. If we do not shut down the human bomb terror factories that Arafat is pioneering today, they will surely, as the light of day, reach the United States with greater and greater devastating force.

This is why there is no alternative to winning this war without delay. No part of the terror network can be left intact. For if not fully eradicated like the most malignant cancer, it will regroup and attack again, with even greater ferocity. Only by dismantling the entire terror network will we be assured of victory. But to assure that this evil does not reemerge a decade or two from

now, we must not merely uproot, but also plant the seeds of freedom. If we win against Arafat, as I know we will, if you win against Saddam and Iraq, what will prevent a new Saddam, or a new Arafat, from coming back ten years, or 20 years from now?

It is important to understand that only under tyranny can a diseased totalitarian mind-set be widely cultivated, and this totalitarian mind-set, which is essential for terrorists to suspend the normal rules that govern human beings' conscious behavior, behavior that prevents them from committing grizzly acts and blowing up babies or a bus full of innocent people, you have to brainwash people systematically under a tyrannical system in order to get them to make these acts, these suicide acts.

Well, it is impossible to produce such a mindset in a climate of democracy and freedom, because the open debate and proality (ph) of ideas that buttress all genuine democracies, and the respect for human rights and the sanctity of life that are the shared values of all free societies, these are, at the end of the day, the permanent antidote to the poison that the sponsors of terror seek to inject into the minds of their recruits, and that is why it is also imperative that once the terror regimes in the Middle East are swept away, the free world, led by America, must begin to build democracy in their place.

This will not happen overnight, and these will not become Western democracies overnight or ever. But we simply can no longer afford to allow this region to remain cloistered by a fanatic militancy. We must let the winds of freedom and independence finally penetrate the one region in the world that clings to unreformed tyranny.

I have thought many times about Israel's position in the world, having led Israel and having represented it in the forums of public opinion and leadership, such as this one. I have to tell you, my friends, that in -- I'm not surprised that in exercising our basic right to defend ourselves, Israel, my country, is condemned by Arab dictatorships. This is predictable.

That today it is condemned by Europe may not be predictable, but it is a difficult thought. Europe, which 60 years ago refused to lift a finger to save millions of Jews on whose soil they were annihilated. Israel is now turning -- or, rather, Europe, is now turning its collective back on the Jewish state that is trying to ward off mass killers with legitimate military action. I think this is downright shameful, but I have to admit that I didn't expect much better from any of these European governments.

Yet, the America I know and have come to deeply respect, has always been

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different. History has entrusted upon this nation the task of carrying the torch of freedom, and time again, through both war and peace, America has carried that torch with courage and with honor. Combining the might the world has never known with a sense of justice that no power in history has possessed. I have come before you today to ask you to courageously continue to carry this torch with courage, with honor. By standing by an outpost of freedom, that is resisting an unprecedented terrorist assault. I ask you to stand by Israel's side in its fight against Arafat's tyranny of terror, and thereby help defeat an evil that threatens all of us, that threatens all of mankind. And knowing you, I am sure that you will respond. Thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

KAGAN: We have been listening to former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu as he speaks on Capital Hill to a group of U.S. senators, talking about the situation in Israel, the tension with the Palestinians, saying that believes it is not the pressure that the Israelis have been putting on the

Palestinians, but rather the restraint that Israel has been called to have in this situation that has led to the very intense violence in that area. He called for three things in his speech. He would like to see the Arafat regime dismantled, and would like it see Yasser Arafat expelled from the region. He would also clean out, he said, terrorist areas of weapons and explosives, and he would like to put up physical barriers, like you see in Gaza, between the main Palestinian population centers and the rest of Israel.

We will have more on this, and, of course, now Palestinian reaction. With that, we go to Leon.

HARRIS: Yeah, joining us now with some reaction to the speech that we heard this morning by Benjamin Netanyahu, and with reaction as well to Israel's position here is **Hasan Abdel Rahman**. He is the chief PLO representative to the U.S., and he is in our New York bureau this morning. Mr. Rahman, we thank you very much for your time this morning.

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PLO REPRESENTATIVE: Thank you.

HARRIS: And first of all, want to -- after welcoming here, would like to ask you for your comments after what you just heard.

RAHMAN: First of all, let me say that I am saddened to see a man like Netanyahu given this honor in the Senate of the United States, a man that was voted out of his office by his people because he lied to them, a man who was investigated in Israel for embezzlement, a man who is known to be a bigot and a racist.

Given this (UNINTELLIGIBLE) the United States and to agitate against international legality, the resolutions of the security council, and against the president of the United States visage in (ph), to join international consensus asking for Israel to hold its brutal, immoral, illegal, criminal attack against the Palestinian people and withdraw its troops from the Palestinian territories. Second, Mr. Netanyahu speaks of cancer. He forgot that the cancer that is

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plaguing the Palestinian-Israeli possibilities for peace is the illegal and immoral occupation of the Palestinian people and the Palestinian territories. Third, he is advocating an apartheid system similar to what the white regime of South Africa imposed on the blacks of South Africa. He is calling for quarantining the Palestinians, in other words.

HARRIS: You are referring to those physical barriers between...

RAHMAN: Oh, absolutely. That is exactly what is happening today. They moved in Palestine 3,000 Jewish settlers and created a system of apartheid between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

I have one advice to Mr. Netanyahu. You know, the only way for the Palestinians and the Israelis to live side by side in peace is when Israel respects the right of the Palestinian people to live as a free nation next to Israel, free of returning of the occupation, free of returning of discrimination, free of returning of violating the rights of the Palestinian people. He is trying to compare between U.S. struggle against terrorism. We joined the U.S. struggle against terrorism because those who attacked New York and Washington were committing an act of aggression against the United States. Because the United States did not have Jewish -- American settlements in Afghanistan and the United States was not occupying Afghanistan in the same way that Israel is occupying the Palestinian territories.

HARRIS: Well, let me ask you about one point that he did make, though, along those same lines. He was saying that these incursions that we have been witnessing over the last few days into the Palestinian territories have been more effective at rooting out any system of terrorism. He cited the fact that

1,400 rifles and a number of bomb making labs were discovered, and that this operation has been more effective than Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority has been at getting in there and rooting those sort of sources out. What do you make of that?

RAHMAN: Well, this is a distortion of the facts. Of course, there are 1,400 guns. But those guns belong to the Palestinian police force. Israel has systematically tried to destroy or attempted to destroy the Palestinian security force. So, most of those Palestinians who are arrested by Israel are civilians, and many of them are members of the Palestinian civilian security force.

HARRIS: Then what of the...

RAHMAN: So those 1,400 guns are the guns of the Palestinian police.

HARRIS: Then what of the 12 bomb factories that he says that they also...

RAHMAN: That's absolutely nonsense. We challenge Israel to bring international observers. Listen, if Israel was really -- what he is saying is truthful, why would they not allow the International Red Cross to witness the atrocities that are committed by Israel. Why they would not allow journalists, if Israel was a real democracy, that he is saying, why they would not allow (UNINTELLIGIBLE) allow journalists to go in and watch what's happening. Anyone who reads the "New York Times" and the "Washington Post" today will see, without any doubt, that Israel is really committing war crimes against the Palestinians.

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That much was said by the International Red Cross. That much was said by journalists, that much was said by Israeli human rights organizations.

HARRIS: Well, let me ask you about one other point that he makes here, and he is not alone in making that, because this point -- this morning, as a matter of fact, we had another expert on with us this morning who also says that that Israeli restraint, and the efforts to actually get Israel to exercise more restraint and not to actually execute these incursions, that pressure to make them stop is what is -- is what is destabilizing the region. What do you make of that?

RAHMAN: Israel did not spare any efforts. You know, there were tens of thousands of Israeli soldiers against civilian population. We do not have an army there. The most that any one Palestinian has, probably, a gun. But you have here tanks, you have Apache helicopters. You have F-16s bombarding civilian areas. This is similar to what Milosevic used in Kosovo and in Bosnia.

You know, the uprising of the Palestinian people in the refugee camp of Jenin, which is one square kilometers with 15,000 poor people living there is similar, in my views, to the uprising of the Jews in the ghettos of Warsaw against the Nazis in the Second World War. Believe me, it is no different, because then, it was the turning of the military of the Nazis, trying to control Europe, and today it is the turning of Israeli army trying to subjugate the Palestinian people forever.

HARRIS: Well, considering all of that, and considering just how far things have unraveled there, Benjamin Netanyahu this morning says there is no political solution to terror. Therefore he believes...

RAHMAN: Because he is not interested in a political solution.

HARRIS: Well, why is it that -- do you still believe a political solution actually is available?

RAHMAN: Absolutely. Absolutely. I think the initiative that was put forward by the Arab states in Beirut last week, that calls for Israel's withdrawal and full and normal relations between the Arab countries and Israel is the basis for an agreement. It is the basis for (UNINTELLIGIBLE), but Mr. Netanyahu never believed in peace. Mr. Netanyahu's three years of tenure as a prime minister

destroyed the possibilities of peace which we built with our previous partner, Mr. Rabin.

Remember that Rabin was killed by the party of Mr. Netanyahu, he was not killed by the Palestinians, because he wanted peace and he was our strategic partner in peace. Mr. Netanyahu opposed Rabin. He agitated against Rabin. In fact, the wife of Rabin, the late Leah Rabin, accused Mr. Netanyahu of agitating for the assassination of Rabin.

So, Mr. Netanyahu is a man I have known for many many years. I served at the United Nations when he was an ambassador. He has always advocated racist views. He believes in the superiority -- quote, unquote -- of the Israelis over the Palestinians. He has no respect for the rights of the Palestinians or the rights of the Arabs.

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HARRIS: But all that...

RAHMAN: He wants to demonize (ph) the Arabs by force. But you know, he is really -- through this policy, is creating generations of angry Palestinians, generations of angered Arabs, who will get back at Israel. We do not want that to happen. We don't like to see our children involved in violence and terrorism. We want to see our children together with Israeli children, living in peace. I hope that wisdom will prevail. I congratulate President Bush for the courage to confront the Israelis and to join the international consensus, because only a political solution that can bring peace for us and the Israelis. No amount of military force, no amount of killing of Palestinians will make the Palestinians submit and give up their God-given right to live as a free people. We repeat what Patrick Henry said, "give me liberty or give me death."

HARRIS: And we will have to leave it there with those words. Chief PLO representative to the U.S. **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, we thank you very much for time and your joining us this morning.

RAHMAN: Thank you, sir.

HARRIS: Talk to you some time down the road -- Daryn.

KAGAN: Real quickly, want to turn with our senior political analyst, Bill Schneider, who visited with us before the speech, and now some comments afterwards.

First, I want to pick up, Bill, on a comment that Mr. Rahman made, what was that? Why is a former Israeli prime minister with very little official standing speaking before the Senate?

WILLIAM SCHNEIDER, CNN SENIOR POLITICAL ANALYST: Well, clearly he objects to some of the policies that the president has pursued, that President Bush has pursued, and Israel has found for decades that it always has friends in the United States Congress.

This is very unusual, because normally foreign powers, foreign countries that the United States deal with -- deals with, work mainly through the executive branch. It is very rare for them to work with members of Congress, but Israel is different because it has always found that Congress has been staunch supporters of Israel, even when they have had problems with the president. And that is why Mr. Netanyahu appeared before Congress today.

KAGAN: When looking at the points for what Mr. Netanyahu was calling for, not much new in terms of what he is calling for, in terms of the Arafat government and the leadership and cleaning out more terrorists and weapons. It seemed the latter part of the speech mainly was kind of like a tisk, tisk, on the U.S.

From the Arab world, we would have expected this, and from Europe, but not from you.

SCHNEIDER: Well, look. The crux of his argument was this statement. He said

there is no political solution for terrorism. There is only a military solution. If we treat this as a political problem, it is subject to negotiations, then we are making rewards for terrorist activities. We are saying, if you stop your terrorism, you will get your state, which is what you want, politically.

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The Palestinian representative just said a minute ago, Israel must recognize the rights of Palestinians to live in a free state of their own. Which is a way of saying, the problem is essentially political and the solution must be political. That is the basic difference between the two sides, and what Mr. Netanyahu is concerned about is that the United States is doing exactly what the Israelis don't want. They are saying to the Palestinians, if you stop, or give up terrorism, then we will talk about a political solution. In fact, Colin Powell is talking about linking the cease-fire to political negotiations. The Israelis do not want to see that linkage, because they say, simply offering political negotiations is offering a reward for terrorist activities.

KAGAN: All right. Bill Schneider in Washington, D.C. Bill, thank you for watching the speech with us. We appreciate it. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED

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MSNBC

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BYLINE: Alan Keyes; George Lewis

GUESTS: Mark Regev; Hasan Rahman; Roderick MacLeish; Vincent Lloyd; Jessica O'Leary; John McCloskey; Tom McSweeney

HIGHLIGHT:

Secretary of State Colin Powell says he's prepared to stay in the area indefinitely doing shuttle diplomacy. But what sort of diplomacy will be successful in the Middle East? Should Secretary Powell meet with Yasser Arafat?

BODY:

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ALAN KEYES, MSNBC HOST: Welcome to MAKING SENSE. I'm Alan Keyes.

Up front tonight, we're going to take a look at the latest developments in the Middle East. Thirteen Israeli soldiers killed today in an ambush, apparently carried out by a suicide bomber. We'll learn later some of the shocking details about that.

Secretary of State Colin Powell says he's prepared to stay in the area indefinitely doing shuttle diplomacy. He has scheduled the meeting with Yasser Arafat. And I'll be commenting on that a little bit later.

President Bush again asks Israel to withdraw from all of the disputed Palestinian territories. But again, it looks as if Israel is going to ignore his request.

And that gets us to our first topic of the evening. I look at the situation going to and fro, and I'm focused on the question of whether or not it is, in fact, in the best interest both of Israel and of the war on terrorism for Israel to back off of its present offensive against the terrorist infrastructure that

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has been responsible for these assaults against innocent civilians.

Shouldn't the response of Israel to President Bush's demand be that Ariel Sharon just says no? Taking a leaf out of our own book, looks him in the eye and basically says, "I have to do, in defense of my people, exactly what you have said we all have to do in our defense against terrorism. And that is stay with it until the end, stay with it until we have destroyed the infrastructure of terror."

Apparently President Bush thinks that there's a different imperative at work for Israel, even though the actual threat of terrorism is daily obviously in greater juxtaposition to the people of Israel even than it is to those of us who have suffered from it in the United States. Up front with us, we have with us Ambassador **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the chief Palestinian representative to the United States, and Mark Regev, the spokesman for the Israeli embassy in Washington to talk about this question. Gentlemen, welcome to MAKING SENSE.

MARK REGEV, ISRAELI EMBASSY SPOKESMAN: Thank you.

HASAN RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED STATES: Thank you.

KEYES: I want to start tonight with Mark Regev. I know this may put you on the spot a little bit, Mark. But it does seem to me there's a little bit of incongruity in turning to Israel as it faces these kinds of attacks and saying you have got to stop your defense against terrorism just right now, regardless of the situation. Shouldn't Israel actually say we've got to finish the job just as you insist on doing?

REGEV: No. When the president of the United States makes a request, we take that very seriously. We know that America is our friend and our ally. And we respect what America says to us, and that has to be very clear.

I'd also like to stress, and I think this is an important point, that we have started to pull out. And we pulled out of two cities already, two large cities, Tulkarem and Qalqilya. And pulled out last night from Qalqilya. Unfortunately, today there was already fire from Qalqilya against Israeli civilians.

Now, we have a problem. We want to pull out. We said from the beginning that this mission would be limited both in scope and in time, and that we'd finish the job and we'd leave. But we don't want to leave and have to go back in. And we're concerned that if we leave too quickly, there will be more and more suicide bombings and more and more people killed. That's not good for Israelis. That's not good for Palestinians. It's not good for the United States and stability in the region.

KEYES: Well, but doesn't that amount to saying, Mark, that one really has to stay there until the job is done? I mean, the president has said "immediately, now, this instant." And that's obviously not taking place. Isn't what is owed to the result taking precedence over the desire to say please to the president of the United States?

REGEV: Our relationship with the United States is an integral part of our security doctrine. It is very important to us, our relationship with the United

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States. And we believe allies should support each other. And we support the United States.

And just as we are thankful that America supports us in our struggles when America has its larger regional aims in the Middle East -- and we're talking about Iraq and Iran and other things that this administration wants to do -- it is our job in Israel also to support the administration. So, obviously we can't do things that will endanger Israeli civilians.

But the president has asked us to withdraw. But Prime Minister Sharon said we, in fact, are speeding up the withdrawal. And we'll be doing so. And hopefully we'll be able to do it in the coming days.

KEYES: Well, as a private American citizen, I will say clearly what I think. And I think that the demand that Israel stop before it has actually been able effectively to address the infrastructure of terrorism is a wrong-headed demand. And I think it should have not have been made. I think it is a mistake.

And as an American citizen, I, thank God, have the privilege of disagreeing with my president. And I disagree with him strongly about this.

Let me go to Ambassador Rahman. Why is it reasonable to make a demand that Israel should withdraw its forces before the objective situation on the ground reassures Israel that it's not going to be further subject to terrorist attacks and suicide bombings and a continuation of the violence that we have seen?

RAHMAN: Because the president of the United States finally realized that Israel is a terrorist state and using terrorist tactics, Mr. Keyes, to kill Palestinian civilians. He joined the international consensus.

Obviously, there are some in this country, like you, Mr. Keyes, who do not believe that. But I must assure you that the whole world is outraged by the criminal behavior of the Israeli Army.

When you attack civilians, maybe some people think that the Palestinians are not human beings and therefore they should be killed. But I am glad to realize that the president of the United States like many others, almost everyone else in the world, came to the realization that Sharon is a terrorist, and he leads an Army that is engaged in Nazi-like behavior because what's happening in Jenin today is similar to what's happened in the Warsaw ghetto when the Nazis invaded the Jewish quarters. And the Jewish people then rose against the Nazis and fought them hard.

And the Palestinians today in the refugee camps of Jenin and in the city of Nablus and everywhere else are fighting this Army that is led by no other than the well-known terrorist Mr. Sharon. And I'm sure that many, many, many people in Israel do not share your views, Mr. Keyes, because the human rights tell them today, protest it to Israel for its demolishing of homes over its citizens for the use of...

KEYES: Well...

RAHMAN: ... let me finish, please.

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KEYES: ... Mr. Ambassador...

RAHMAN: ... for the use of its -- I'm saying let me finish what I am saying because you did not interrupt Mr. Regev when he was speaking. I am sure that no decent people will tolerate the bombardment of civilian quarters with Apache helicopters or with tanks.

KEYES: Mr. Ambassador...

(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: ... Mr. Ambassador, Mr. Ambassador, several problems. I want to get back to Mark Regev for a response. But I have one first. Point of personal

privilege.

RAHMAN: Go ahead.

KEYES: I have one first, because frankly I don't advocate for the killing of Palestinians.

RAHMAN: Well, you just did.

KEYES: I think -- excuse me...

RAHMAN: You just did.

KEYES: ... let me finish, sir.

RAHMAN: Go ahead.

KEYES: I think that the killing of innocent Palestinians is a travesty.

RAHMAN: Yes.

KEYES: And that's why I think that the Palestinians deserve better leadership. I have no quarrel with the Palestinian people.

RAHMAN: That's your opinion.

KEYES: Let me finish, sir. I have a quarrel with a leadership that will encourage its people to go out and kill themselves...

RAHMAN: You are wrong, Mr. Keyes.

KEYES: ... that will take young women and take 10-year-old kids...

RAHMAN: You are not being an objective journalist...

KEYES: ... and send them to their deaths. I think that...

(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: ... I think that such a leadership is morally bankrupt. And I think that that moral bankruptcy...

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RAHMAN: I think you are wrong. I think you are wrong.

KEYES: ... clearly suggests that the Palestinians deserve better leadership than those who are bent on this kind of self-destruction.

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: That's your opinion. And that is your opinion.

KEYES: Number two, I at least have no problem clearly understanding what constitutes terrorism. War is an ugly business.

RAHMAN: Well, I am sure...

KEYES: Let me finish, sir.

(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: War is an ugly business. And sometimes innocent people will, as they say, as a collateral matter, they may be killed in war. And that is a terrible tragedy. But when you consciously adopt a strategy that is aimed at taking people into the midst of innocent folks and blowing them up and destroying those innocent people, that constitutes targeting...

RAHMAN: That is what Israel is doing today to the Palestinians.

KEYES: ... that constitutes targeting of innocent civilians...

RAHMAN: That's what Israel is doing today.

KEYES: ... that crosses the line. Now, Mr. Regev, Ambassador Rahman is suggesting that in the style of Nazis -- and I have to confess I find this comparison, I don't know about you, I find it deeply offensive...

RAHMAN: That is your problem, Mr. Keyes.

KEYES: ... but in the style of Nazis in the Warsaw ghetto, Israeli troops are moving with the implication that somehow they are moving against innocent civilians. Is that what's happening in Jenin? I need a clarification.

REGEV: I find the comparison obscene. And I say that with all the force that I can. I'm a former infantryman myself. Everyone in Israel does national service. I did it myself.

There's nothing more dangerous, nothing -- anyone who has been in the U.S.

military will tell you the same. There's nothing more dangerous than house-to-house fighting in an urban built-up area. And that's what our boys are doing.

I mean, if Mr. Rahman's charges were true, we could just bomb from the air or shell from a...

RAHMAN: That's what you're doing today.

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REGEV: ... Sorry, I didn't interrupt you, Mr. Rahman...

RAHMAN: I'm not interrupting.

REGEV: ... it would have -- we lost 12 boys today, 13 boys today, in Jenin because we're doing dangerous house-to-house fighting. Our soldiers have very, very strict orders to avoid civilian casualties.

We want a surgical strike. We want to do as much as we can to safeguard the local population.

I want to tell you the chief of staff of the Israeli Defense Force, General Mofaz, gave a personal orders three days ago to every soldier saying, "Do the mission, but the maximum effort has to be made to safeguard the civilian population. We are not the enemies of the Palestinian people. We are the enemies of a terrorist regime, unfortunately, that supports groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah."

And as long as, unfortunately, the Palestinian leadership is in bed with these sort of terrorist groups, we have to respond. But we are not against the Palestinian people. We are not hurting the Palestinian people. We are trying only to hurt the terrorists.

KEYES: Ambassador Rahman, do you think that the suicide bombers have orders to avoid civilian casualties when they go into public areas and holiday observances and blow themselves up? Do they have orders to avoid civilian casualties, do you think, Mr. Ambassador?

RAHMAN: You know, if you were listening to me or you care to listen, you would understand what I am saying. What I said always, and we have said, that we are opposed any action against Israeli civilians, whether it is suicide bombers or others.

And our suicide bombers that you are talking about are individuals. They are a small minority. And they are engaged in acts that we are opposed to.

REGEV: They are funded by Mr. Arafat.

RAHMAN: No.

REGEV: They are funded by Mr. Arafat. We have documents.

RAHMAN: I did not interrupt you, so, please. And, therefore, we are against it. But this terror by the Israelis, Mr. Keyes, is conducted by no other than Mr. Sharon, the prime minister.

And if you think that Israel is not engaged in terrorism, why don't you look at the reports of your colleagues, the journalists, who are reporting from there? They are saying that Israel is targeting civilians, including journalists. The International Red Cross suspended operations in protest against the atrocities that the Israelis are committing against the Palestinians.

Adding to that, Mr. Keyes, you -- I'm sure that you understand what freedom means. The Palestinian people have been subjected to a constant regime of terror

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for 36 years and the Israeli military occupation. You should more than anybody else understand when you establish cities and towns exclusively for Jews, that's obscene, in Palestinian territories.

KEYES: What I understand, Mr. Ambassador, sad to say, is that under the

present kind of leadership, which is ordering people out for suicide bombings, which as itself -- let me finish...

RAHMAN: You are not listening to me.

KEYES: ... you always talk about folks interrupting, this is my show, I get to have my say on it. Excuse me...

RAHMAN: Then invite me...

KEYES: ... and I'll tell you. I have a problem with this whole notion that freedom is represented by a regime that would lead its people to this kind of self-destructive death, that has itself practiced in order to maintain its power the same kind of terrorism against Palestinians themselves to prevent opposition and other voices from emerging. Don't expect that folks who know the history are going to ignore those facts and let you get away with the kind of rhetoric that I'm afraid has dominated this situation for too long. Not good for us. And it's not good for Palestinians, either.

RAHMAN: That's because we are the minority.

KEYES: Right now, sad to say, what I see is a leadership that offers to Palestinians a way of death, a way of self-destruction, not a way of life. And, frankly, Mark Regev, I think it is important. You need to respond.

REGEV: I would love to.

KEYES: He is saying that the international community...

RAHMAN: He does not need to having you there, Mr. Keyes. (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

KEYES: He is saying that the international community is witnessing a regime of terrorism by Israel against journalism and other civilians. Is that the case?

REGEV: Can I tell you the International Committee of the Red Cross wrote an official letter of complaint to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society because they've been using ambulances...

RAHMAN: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) condemn you.

REGEV: ... they've been using ambulances to carry suicide bombers, to carry explosives, to carry weapons.

RAHMAN: That's not true.

REGEV: You know this is true, Mr. Rahman. Don't deny it.

RAHMAN: Nonsense. Nonsense.

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REGEV: And we've had more than one occasion, unfortunately, with ambulances, which everyone has national conventions not to use ambulances like this -- the Palestinians, we found three weeks ago, a suicide bomber with all the explosives on him ready to go off, being transported into Israel in a Palestinian ambulance...

RAHMAN: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) to what I'm saying.

REGEV: ... and the Red Crescent received a letter from the International Committee of the Red Cross complaining about this, Mr. Rahman.

(CROSSTALK)

REGEV: And you know it to be true.

KEYES: I have to thank you gentlemen for joining us. We've come up against the end of our time.

RAHMAN: I want to respond. Mr. Keyes, I want to say something before we leave.

KEYES: Ambassador Rahman, we'll have you back. But we're at the end of our time now.

RAHMAN: You know...

KEYES: I really appreciate your coming in.

Reaction to the conflict in the Middle East has been intense. Protests are going on on college campuses across the country, something we haven't seen

intensively for quite some years. There were over 20 of them today, the largest at the University of California at Berkeley, around 1,000 protesters. They occupied a classroom building there.

Next, in the "Heart of the Matter," we're going to address these questions. Is the comparison with South Africa that these demonstrators are making valid? Who deserves moral condemnation, the terrorists or Israel for responding to terrorism? And should we divest in Israel or the oil axis that is sponsoring terrorism against Israel and us?

You're watching MSNBC, the best news on cable. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

RODERICK MACLEISH, JR., PRIEST ABUSE VICTIM ATTORNEY: What we saw when we first looked at these documents, this is the records of Paul Shanley at the Archdiocese of Boston, were with the words "Men and Boys."

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KEYES: That was the lawyer for a man who claims he was abused by a Boston priest. That priest later spoke at the founding meeting of the North American
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Man-Boy Love Association, an association that advocates homosexual pedophilia.

In our next half hour, we'll debate whether the priest who knew about this, Cardinal Law of Boston, should resign and be held accountable.

A reminder that the chat room is on fire tonight. And you can join in right now at chat.msnbc.com.

First, though, the anti-Israeli Mid-East protests on American college campuses today have been attracting a lot of attention. Here is MSNBC's George Lewis.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GEORGE LEWIS, NBC NEWS CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): At the University of California-Berkeley...

PROTESTERS: End the occupation! End the occupation!

LEWIS: At the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and at a couple dozen other campuses across the country today, students marched in opposition to Israel's occupation of Palestinian areas.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I think the students are engaged. I think this has really penetrated the apathy that sometimes characterizes students.

LEWIS: Berkeley, the scene of the biggest demonstration, around 1,000 protesters occupying a classroom building.

(on camera): It's a scene reminiscent of the '60s in the same place where there were huge anti-Vietnam demonstrations. Now the pro-Palestinian students say they're adopting the same kind of activism.

NOURA ERAKAT, STUDENTS FOR JUSTICE IN PALESTINE: What you're seeing today is basically frustration. Enough is enough. Bush said it. We've been saying it. Palestinians have said it for 54 years.

LEWIS (voice-over): And the students say their movement is beginning to attract others as well. Mica Pedan (ph) calls himself an anti-Zionist Jew.

MICA PEDAN, STUDENT: The Jewish people will never have shalom, peace, and safety until we put justice for the Palestinian people.

LEWIS: But he was booed by Jewish students who fear that the new pro-Palestinian activism has anti-Semitic overtones that could lead to violence in this country. The director of the Hillel Jewish Student Center in Berkeley says recently someone hurled a cinder block through the center's plate glass door.

ADAM WEISBERG, DIRECTOR, HILLEL JEWISH STUDENT CENTER: Anti-Semitic graffiti

was scrawled there as well. There was an attack on two identifiably Jewish members of the community shortly thereafter.

LEWIS: During the pro-Palestinian demonstration, Jewish students stood nearby reading off the names of victims of the Nazi holocaust on this Holocaust

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Remembrance Day. But those supporting the Palestinians called it a day of action as the tensions in the Middle East begin to play out on American college campuses.

George Lewis, NBC News, Berkeley.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

KEYES: Joining us now to get to the heart of this matter, Jessica Oleon, a senior at Berkeley and president of the Jewish Student Union. She takes issue with the pro-Palestinian protests at her school today. And Vincent Lloyd, a junior at Princeton University and one of the student organizers of the Princeton Divestment Campaign.

Welcome, both of you, to MAKING SENSE. Let me start with you, Vincent.

Why do you think that it makes sense, first to draw a parallel as some are doing between the situation in the Mid-East today and the situation of South Africa and to suggest that divestiture, one of the approaches that was used in the South African case, would be appropriate in the case of Israel? Why do you think that's so?

VINCENT LLOYD, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY: Well, 25 years ago, Princeton students, community members, and faculty came together and said that Princeton University ought not be investing in U.S. companies that are doing business in South Africa while the South African government is oppressing millions of its people and committing human rights abuses.

And we believe that the same thing is happening in Israel today, that Israel is committing human rights abuses, Israel is violating international law, and that Princeton University ought not be investing in U.S. companies that are doing substantial amounts of business in Israel while these things are happening.

KEYES: Well, do you think that we ought to be investing in companies that are doing substantial business with Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, and others who have been demonstrated to be supporting the terrorists, the suicide bombers, the others, who are consciously targeting innocent civilians in the Middle East and who have been responsible even for terrorist acts against us? Would you think that divestiture is appropriate against those companies too?

LLOYD: We believe that human rights of all people must be respected, and that there are countries around the world that are violating human rights. But we believe that in this particular case, with the public eye on Israel and with the debate in the media so much looking like Israel versus terrorists, we believe that by focusing on Israel, we can make people think about the situation like they were thinking about South Africa.

KEYES: So, you want to distract people from the terrorists who have killed innocent civilians so, what, they can go on with their work without interference?

LLOYD: Like the case in South Africa when there was violence on both sides, we want to look at the fundamentals of the situation. We want to look at three

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million oppressed Palestinians who have been living under occupation for 35 years. We want to look at the legal use of torture in Israel. We want to look at the transfer of civilian population into the occupied territories. And we want

to look at the refugees who have been kicked out and don't have a right to come back to their homelands.

Just like in the case of South Africa, these -- if we look at the fundamentals, we see there is violence on both sides. And we condemn the violence on both sides. And we (UNINTELLIGIBLE) the fundamentals.

KEYES: Jessica OLeon, you look at this situation. Does it make sense to you, first, to equate Israel with South Africa, and, second, to suggest that one should do it, especially so that the world won't look at the work of the terrorists?

JESSICA OLEON, SENIOR, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-BERKELEY: No, it makes no sense whatsoever. And, actually, it makes me vaguely sick. I think the biggest differences between what happened in South Africa, which was clearly apartheid, was there was a legal system in place that was the policy of the government that limited the rights of citizens in terms of voting, set up different forms of taxation for different types of citizens, and limited the travel of citizens in the country.

The difference in Israel, and this is the biggest difference, is that all Israeli citizens, whether they're Israeli or Arab birth, whether they're Christian, Muslim, Jewish, brown, blue, or purple have the same rights as the citizens of the state of Israel. The people who hat we're trying to talk about here are non-citizen Palestinians who live in the territories, an area that Israel has largely been trying to give back and create a Palestinian state for, for at least the last eight years, and I think it can be argued for a long time before that.

KEYES: Now, Vincent Lloyd, I find it a little strange, though, because I think what Jessica said is clearly consistent with the facts. Israel hasn't wanted to hold onto these territories. They've been engaged in negotiations to give them back to the Palestinians, even set up the Palestinian Authority, agree to all of that, and yet because Yasser Arafat didn't get exactly what he wanted at the negotiating table, he unleashed a wave of terror. Why don't you want to look at those facts?

LLOYD: We've been waiting for 35 years for Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories. International law and the United Nations have clearly said that Israel is in violation of international law by occupying land.

KEYES: That's not true, by the way. I'm sorry, Vincent, I have to stop you a second because what you just said is not true. First of all, international law does not require that territory acquired as a result of victory in war simply be surrendered to those who were defeated. What it requires, if anything, is -- or what it allows -- is that it can be given back in the context of a negotiated peace, which is what Israel has been trying to do.

And the resolution 242 that is referred to by people does not require that the Israeli withdrawal be outside the context of such negotiations. So, why would you say it does?

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LLOYD: The resolution clearly states Israel must withdraw from territories conquered in the recent conflict. That was the 1967 conflict. I don't think there's much room for debate there. Israel must withdraw.

KEYES: Oh, yes, there is. I'm sorry. There has been a lot of room for debate because that's exactly what Israel has been trying to do, consummate with the fact that international law does not require that the victorious party give back territory to the defeated party outside the context of a negotiated settlement.

And Israel has been trying to negotiate a settlement. But because Yasser Arafat didn't get all he wanted, he started killing people. And you're saying we

should ignore that?

LLOYD: We're saying that while there are three million people living under oppression, under occupation, that have been doing so, living in this condition for 35 years, it's -- if you -- it's not unexpected that there is violence on both sides, and that when we change the fundamentals of the situation, then peace will be much easier to achieve. And...

KEYES: Can I ask you one final question, Vincent? Because Osama bin Laden said that when he attacked the World Trade Center and blew up the Pentagon and killed thousands of Americans, he did it because of Israel and because of American support for Israel and that it was in order to try to achieve just the aims you're describing for the Palestinian people. So, if you believe that violence in pursuit of those objectives against innocent people, terrorism, is OK, do you then approve of Osama bin Laden's actions?

LLOYD: We condemn all violence. But what we're saying is that if you treat people like dogs and they bite you, you shouldn't be surprised. Right? I think we're condemning -- we always condemn (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

KEYES: Actually, I'm a follower of Martin Luther King. And I think that no matter how people treat you, you can still act like a human being. He taught me that.

LLOYD: We believe that too.

KEYES: Jessica O'Leary, Jessica O'Leary...

OLEARY: Yes.

KEYES: ... I look at this situation. And do you think that it is appropriate to put Israel in the same category as folks who are consciously targeting innocent life? Is that what the Israelis are doing?

OLEARY: No, I think that they're trying to establish the right to their own state as they won 50 years ago and again in 1963 and again in 1967, the right to a state with logical and defensible borders. And I think that they have been working very hard and sometimes have a negotiating partner and sometimes clearly don't, to try to create a parallel state, a Palestinian state with safe, negotiable, defensible borders. And the deal from the Israeli perspective is that both of these states coexist in peace and that Israel is recognized and lives with normalized relations with all of their neighbors.

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KEYES: Well, I want to thank you both for joining us today. It's obvious that this is the beginning of a renewed debate and discussion. But I've got to say, personally, I think folks are going to have a hard time trying to establish that all the wrong of this situation is on the Israeli side and that we should totally ignore the deep, outrageous commitment to violence against the innocent that has even claimed thousands of American lives.

I don't think many of us are going to be willing to do that. We'll see.

Next, the new outrage in the ongoing crisis in the Catholic Church. Is it assignment time for the see-no-evil leaders to go? Stay with us as we discuss it coming up next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KEYES: Welcome back to MAKING SENSE. I'm Alan Keyes.

The cloud over the Catholic Church in Boston looks more ominous tonight, a day after papers were discovered that showed church leaders knew about Father Paul Shanley's not only sexual exploits but his public advocacy of homosexual pedophilia at a founding meeting of a group called the North American Man Boy Love Association, a group dedicated to proselytizing for this kind of pedophilia between men and boys.

Joining us now is Father John McCloskey, the director of the Catholic

Information Center of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., and Monsignor Tom McSweeney, an MSNBC religion analyst and the former national director of christophers.org, a Catholic media outreach organization.

Father John, I have to say that when I read this this morning, it started off that this was going to be my outrage of the day, and the more we talked about it, the more it seemed to me that we had to focus a lot more attention on it than that because -- to tell you the truth, I think this is one step beyond what had already crossed the line.

I mean, it's one thing to try to say this is a weak person and they have sinned with these individuals and we want to show understanding, but when you stand in a public place and join in the founding of an organization that advocates for a mortal sin, how on earth can this be consistent with a priestly vocation?

I simply don't understand this and how anybody seeing somebody who was guilty of such an offense could then say, "You'll continue in this vocation that your actions have betrayed," it makes no sense to me, and I don't think it makes sense to many other Catholics in this country.

How could it happen and doesn't the judgment of the prelates who were able to look at this advocacy of evil -- because we're not talking here about weakness anymore -- and look the other way -- don't they have to be held accountable now?

FATHER C. JOHN MCCLOSKEY, CATHOLIC INFORMATION CENTER: I think they certainly do have to be held accountable. I want to be fair only to say that I would like to know what the archdiocese of Boston and -- how they're going to respond to what has happened over the last day or two in terms of revelation of this

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particular incident. They really must speak in order to explain this.

As it appears to a person who reads it or hears about it, it's certainly inexcusable, and it really does bring up big questions in terms of who was responsible, from the top on down in the archdiocese of Boston in terms of dealing with Father Shanley.

KEYES: Father McSweeney, do you think that it's time for Cardinal Law to consider the tremendous challenge that is being done? I hear that in Boston now they're considering criminal charges. It would be, to my knowledge, unprecedented, the spectacle of a Catholic prelate at this level on some criminal charge before a court. Don't you think it's time that he really, for the sake of the church, consider resignation?

MSGR. TOM MCSWEENEY, MSNBC RELIGION ANALYST: Alan, I've been on the phone all day, I've traveled around the country even in these last couple of days, and that support that stood for Cardinal Law has actually evaporated. To report to you that -- the feeling and the sentiment that was once with Cardinal Law as he was negotiating this great crisis seems to have just fallen right through the floor.

Yes, indeed, it is time for Cardinal Law to resign, to consider more the opportunity that still exists for some recovery time. The issue now is about recovering, it's about healing in the church, and to watch Cardinal Law day after day in courts of law responding to litigation is just going to chew up all that recovery time that we have to initiate right now.

KEYES: Father John, do you think that that's true -- because I think that, obviously, if the cardinal is engaged in constantly trying to respond to these kinds of things, what happens to the pastoral mission and the other work that needs to go on? At the end of the day, the church is not about defending itself against these sort of charges, but they start to absorb everything, don't they?

MCCLOSKEY: Yes. First of all, whether Cardinal Law resigns or not, he still

may be liable to criminal prosecution or investigation and that may be still a cardinal of the church whether he's resigned as archbishop or not, which is a very ugly scenario.

I think in terms of the possibility of resignation, that is something only Cardinal Law, on one hand, can truly decide, whether it's better for him to resign or it's better to stay on as a shepherd of the church, as a success of the apostles, and try and undo a lot of the damage that has taken place under his leadership in this particular area in the archdiocese of Boston.

There is one other person that's also very much involved, and that, of course, is John Paul II, who is his superior in the Catholic Church. Whether the holy father would ask for his resignation or whether he would accept it if it was offered is also a very big question.

But I think only Cardinal Law in his conscience as the archbishop in Boston and the holy father in Rome can make that decision. I certainly can't.

KEYES: I understand that there are some high-level American prelates now in Rome and that meetings with the pope are planned. Have you heard about this?

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MCCLOSKEY: Well, I have not heard about that. However, almost always there are high-level American prelates in Rome, but I'm not sure that they are necessarily there in order to discuss this particular tragedy.

KEYES: Now I would like to address this to both of you, starting with Father McSweeney, because you talked about healing, and I think it's always important in the context of looking at this terrible crisis to think in terms of how one goes beyond it because I think that you have a lot of people who are heartbroken, people who are shaken in some sense in their faith, though not abandoning it at all, but who nonetheless, I think, are in a situation where a healing process is going to be needed.

Father McSweeney, what does that consist in, do you think?

MCSWEENEY: In -- it consists right now in trying to lance the boil that just seems to be bubbling up every day, to take some of the pressure off of the wound, and the cardinal's resignation would go a long way to start lancing that boil.

We saw in Ireland where a bishop was brave enough and was concerned more about integrity to step out of his office, to tender his resignation to John Paul, who did, in fact, accept his resignation, and now Ireland is moving on that heavy litigious past, which -- to address all the issues of abuse and also simply to recognize that, with Cardinal Law, resignation doesn't necessarily mean failure.

It takes some grit, it takes some courage to live up to the moral standards of the church, and if he has failed, he can claim himself to be at least accountable on the level of integrity by resigning.

KEYES: Father John, what is the healing path here to get us to a point where we can begin to move beyond this tragedy and to rebuild a sense of confidence, I think, with the...

MCCLOSKEY: I think the people of the Catholic Church and throughout the United States, I think, still have a great confidence in their prelates and their priests. This is an isolated, very small percentage of Catholic priests.

At the same time, I think we talk about healing, which is important, and, certainly, justice for the victims, but I think, also, what is necessary, above all, is reform and renewal in the church. We simply cannot have people admitted to seminaries or to the priesthood that are capable of performing these type of acts.

And at the higher level we have to make sure that, if such things happen,

that they aren't covered and that they are honest with the people in the church about -- the important thing is to have the great sympathy and understanding for the victims and not in any way try and protect the priests who in any way have abused them.

KEYES: We'll have more with our guests in just a minute. We'll be focusing or trying to focus on the question again of how we rebuild and what understanding has to be brought to this crisis, particularly of the matters of human sexuality and sexual responsibility that might show us a way out of it, to avoid the

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outrages of the past, but also to build toward a more positive future.

And later, my outrage of the day.

We'll be right back after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KEYES: We're back talking about the Catholic Church scandal, and still with us, Father John McCloskey and Monsignor Tom McSweeney.

Gentlemen, two questions. First of all, I think we've talked around it maybe too much, but isn't the core of this problem in the first instance the problem of homosexuality and tolerance for homosexuality in the priesthood, and don't we just have to definitively make it clear that that's intolerable and is going to be put behind us?

Father John?

MCCLOSKEY: I would agree with you entirely there. I think that is a problem, a very small percentage of active homosexuals in the priesthood who have acted in this sort of way. All the precautions have to be taken with a zero tolerance for the possibility of entrance in the seminaries and ordination of homosexuals to the priesthood.

The bishops will be meeting in June. I'm sure they'll be discussing this. And this is, indeed, and has been the consistent advice of the Vatican over a good number of years. I will not say this has been largely ignored, but it certainly has not been paid attention to in such a way. If it had, we would not have a lot of these problems.

KEYES: Father Tom?

MCSWEENEY: Alan, I don't get the full drift of your question. We're off talking about homosexuality right now. This issue is about the systemic problems in the Catholic Church, when the hierarchy throws the veil of secrecy over issues, when the hierarchy is deceptive with the people that it's intending to serve.

Why we're going to wheedle in, you know, one sexual preference here in homosexuality when we're talking about the systemic issue...

KEYES: Well, I'll tell you. Can I explain why?

MCSWEENEY: Yes.

KEYES: I'll explain why. Because it seems to me that at the root of this was more than just sexual episodes. Homo...

MCSWEENEY: No.

(CROSSTALK)

KEYES: Let me finish. Father Tom, let me finish. Let me finish.

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Yes, indeed, because I think what was at the root of it was a corrupt understanding of human sexuality, that tolerance for homosexuality arises, in fact, from a failure to understand that homosexuality represents the refutation of the Catholic theological understanding of the sacredness of human sexuality and that that, in fact, is at the heart of the problem, which has been reflected

in a willingness on the part of too many prelates to borrow an understanding of sexuality from modern psychology, from modern sociology, from the secular world, even though that understanding is entirely incompatible with the theological truths represented by the church.

MCSWEENEY: That is the -- absolutely. And it is incompatible. If that is your point of view, get ready and fasten your seat belt because it's going to be a very bumpy ride. You know the statistics on homosexuality among the Catholic clergy. The statistics are as high as 50 percent.

MCCLOSKEY: That is absurd. That is totally absurd.

MCSWEENEY: That is -- but that is Cousins (ph). That's a reputable report, and I know Father John can tell me it's as low as 4 percent or whatever...

MCCLOSKEY: It is...

MCSWEENEY: ... but you're saying -- but you're saying it is that large of an issue. You're saying it is that large of an issue.

KEYES: Oh, I -- what I am telling you is more than that because -- it's more than just a question of how many individuals are or are not homosexuals.

The willingness to tolerate homosexuality is the willingness to take a view of human sexuality that removes it entirely from the purview of procreation, from the purview of a relationship with God, from the purview of Genesis and the image of God that is reflected in human sexuality, and instead places it in an entirely, worldly, sexual, fleshly context that is absolutely a refutation of the theological understanding that the church has promoted of human sexuality.

MCCLOSKEY: Any priest who is not capable of receiving the gift of priestly celibacy, whether they're heterosexual or homosexual, simply cannot be ordained a priest because they were -- there was an incapacity to live a commitment that is part of being a Catholic priest.

MCSWEENEY: I will give you this, Alan. Grace builds on nature. No amount of praying about our problems is going to make them go away. We have to be right with ourself as a church, and we do have to live up to the standards that we set for ourselves.

KEYES: Well, I've got to tell you, Father Tom, I -- if what I hear from your side right now is an evasion of the root issue of how the church deals with and presents the theology of the body and of human sexuality and if you don't understand that at the heart of this problem...

MCSWEENEY: I understand...

KEYES: ... there is more...

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MCSWEENEY: I understand...

KEYES: ... than some sociological challenge, there is a spiritual challenge, and if that spiritual challenge is not...

MCSWEENEY: I understand the...

KEYES: ... dealt with, then nothing else that is done is really going to solve this problem. I've got to tell you...

MCSWEENEY: Alan -- Alan, give me a second.

KEYES: ... I think that's a mistake.

MCSWEENEY: Just give me one second. Give me one second. We're not...

KEYES: Well, sad to say, I'll have to have you both back because we've run out of seconds.

MCSWEENEY: You better have us back, Alan.

KEYES: We sure will. I'll be glad to do it.

Next -- next, we will get to my outrage of the day.

But, first, does this make sense? Congress doled out \$20.1 billion for pet projects in fiscal year 2002, according to the Citizens Against Government Waste

Annual Pig Book. Their annual report was issued today.

A youth outreach program in Missouri expected to spend \$273,000 to combat goth culture; \$50,000 for tattoo removal in San Luis Obispo, California; \$400,000 to restore chimneys on Cumberland Island in Georgia. That money's really going up in smoke.

In 2001, there was \$18.5 billion in pork-barrel spending. Pentagon officials, by the way, predict an \$18-billion shortfall in the defense budget to fight the war on terrorism. So which do you think is more important -- our security or the pig book and the pork? I think we need to get rid of this rancid pork, don't you, and not sacrifice our security?

Does this make sense?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KEYES: Now time for my outrage of the day.

You heard that Colin Powell is going to meet with Yasser Arafat. Now here is what Colin Powell said about that possible meeting on "Meet the Press" on Sunday.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

COLIN POWELL, SECRETARY OF STATE: So, if circumstances permit, if the opportunity presents itself, I would try to see Chairman Arafat as well as other

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MSNBC April 9, 2002 Tuesday

Palestinian leaders.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KEYES: If circumstances permit. Now what circumstances do we face? We had Bibi Netanyahu on the network saying that a 10-year-old had carried out the suicide bombing that killed 13 Israeli soldiers today. And in the context of that abuse of a child's life, here's what Colin Powell had to say about the meeting with Chairman Arafat.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

POWELL: I'm looking forward to conversations with the prime minister, and I intend to meet with Chairman Arafat.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KEYES: You know what I think is sad? By going ahead with this meeting, it appears that Colin Powell is saying that we have no choice but to foist off on the Palestinian people the kind of leaders that will take children and send them to their deaths, that will consciously make use of those young lives as instruments of destruction and self-destruction.

I don't think that that's good for the Palestinian people, and I sure don't think it sends the kind of message about America's attitude toward terrorism that is going to quell the temptation on the part of these terrorists to believe that no matter how abusive they become of human life, even when they take the innocent lives of children and use them abusively to take the innocent lives of others, we will still be talking to them.

Why doesn't he open up negotiations with Osama bin Laden because I can't think he's that much worse.

That's my sense of it.

Thanks. "THE NEWS WITH BRIAN WILLIAMS" is up next. I'll see you tomorrow.

LOAD-DATE: July 9, 2003

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SHOW: The Big Story

April 8, 2002, Monday 5:00

PM ET

NETWORK: Fox News Channel Cable Programming

MEDIUM: Cable

LENGTH: 94 words

BODY:

START: 30.22

Teased Segment - Liberty or Death. It's believed that Yasser Arafat is getting people to believe that they are able to do something right if they die for their beliefs.

Studio Interview - **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, PLO Rep. to the US, says there are some resolutions that have been voted on and went through in the US. He says Mr. Sharon is promising to hold back, but he's continuing his war in the city of Bethlehem.

Visual - Israeli troops.

Visual - Protestors. Rahman the cause for all of the conflicts is a political issue.

END: 34.16

SEGMENT-ID: 16

PROGRAM-ID: fnc17000408

LOAD-DATE: May 21, 2002

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CNN

SHOW: CNN SUNDAY 16:00

April 7, 2002 Sunday

Transcript # 040702CN.V36

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 991 words

HEADLINE: Interviews With **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Yehuda Lancry

GUESTS: Yehuda Lancry, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**

BYLINE: Fredricka Whitfield

HIGHLIGHT:

Hasan Abdel Rahman, Palestinian representative to the U.S., and Yehuda Lancry, the Israeli ambassador to the United Nations, discuss the crisis in the Middle East.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

FREDRICKA WHITFIELD, CNN ANCHOR: We have now two guests to talk about what

Secretary Powell is up against on his Middle East mission -- **Hasan Abdel Rahman**,

the Palestinian representative to the U.S. is in Washington; and Yehuda Lancry,

the Israeli ambassador to the United Nations. He joins us from New York.

Well, Mr. Lancry, let me begin with you. If Israel continues to ignore the U.N. resolution to withdraw immediately, what recourse does the U.N. have?

YEHUDA LANCERY, ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO U.N.: Indeed we do not even know of the U.N. resolution, but I have to recall that this U.N. resolution precisely calls

on both sides to take steps. It is a package of reciprocal steps from the Palestinian side and the Israeli side. The Palestinian reading is a necessary Israeli withdrawal, but we also expect some steps from the Palestinian side. That is to say, to stop terrorism, to declare that they are ready for a cease-fire...

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CNN SUNDAY 16:00 April 7, 2002 Sunday

WHITFIELD: But if Israel -- I'm sorry -- but if Israel is so far calling its mission successful, there had not been any suicide bombings in recent days -- but they continue on its incursion, then we're hearing from President Bush, we're hearing from U.N. representatives that the withdrawal must take place immediately.

LANCRY: If there is no suicide bombing, it is strictly related to the fact that Israeli troops are conducting the operations. And we have still to approach the terrorist network in different Palestinian cities. We intend to withdraw, that is clear cut Israeli policy. But I would like to recall the fact that while General Zinni was proposing to Chairman Arafat last Friday, bridging proposal, calling him to declare a cease-fire. The Palestinian answer was a negative one, and they put a condition first on Israel withdrawal, then maybe a Palestinian step.

WHITFIELD: OK. Well, Mr. Rahman then, if the incursion is still ongoing when Powell gets on the ground there in Israel, how much do you believe this may undermine his mission?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE U.S.: Well, first of all, the Palestinian people, the Arab world and the international community is watching to see who is really in control, who calls the shots. Is it the president of the United States or Mr. Sharon?

WHITFIELD: Well, who do you think is calling the shots?

RAHMAN: Well, it seems that Mr. Sharon is calling the shots, because Mr. Sharon is defying the president of the United States and defying the Security Council. You just watched the report from Bethlehem and from Jenin and -- Israel is not attacking a few individuals. It is imposing a terror regime on the whole Palestinian population.

Those little children who are without food, those people who are wounded without medicine, those people who are being shelled and bombarded by helicopters in the refugee camps in Jenin and Nablus. So what you have here is an all-out war directed against every single Palestinian man, woman and child, and it is not a police operation to arrest a few people as Mr. Lantry or Israeli spokesmen want us to believe.

Therefore, here is the challenge to Mr. Bush. If you are really the leader of the world, Mr. Bush, can you force Mr. Sharon to stop this, aggression against the Palestinian people? If you are not, then the Palestinian people and the Arab world and the international community will have to look for somebody else.

WHITFIELD: Well, Mr. Lantry, you said that you do not believe that there is any link between military incursion and the fact that there had not been any suicide bombings in recent days. If that is the case, then what do you believe the Israeli government is accomplishing?

LANCRY: We are still pursuing our activity there, not against the Palestinian people, and of course, we deplore the suffering of the Palestinian innocent people. But don't forget, and President Bush had also this in mind, while he asked Israel to withdraw -- Israel is conducting an operation of legitimate

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self-defense, which was provoked by the Passover massacre, which was provoked by a series of suicide bombings.

I didn't heard my colleague, Ambassador Abdel Rahman, deploring the fact that Israelis were killed, dozens and dozens of Israelis. I do understand the suffering of the Palestinian people, but he also has with his leadership to internalize the Israeli suffering. We're going to withdraw. We're not defying neither the president of the United States, nor the Security Council, but we are now in the midst of the dismantling of the terrorist network...

WHITFIELD: All right, Mr. Rahman, let me ask you real quick because we're running out of time, do you believe that the military incursions have in any way helped launch the Palestinian militants into a new stage of planning?

RAHMAN: No, this is really not an attack against any particular group. It is an attack against all the Palestinian people. Mr. Sharon has two objectives. One is to dismantle the Palestinian National Authority. Second, he wants to defeat the Palestinian people and afflict as much damage on the Palestinian community as possible.

WHITFIELD: OK.

RAHMAN: What he is doing is really he's turning more Palestinians to be extremist because this pain and suffering that is inflicted on the Palestinian people has one effect, and that is Palestinians become more angry, more frustrated and more desperate.

WHITFIELD: OK, we're running out of time. Thank you very much, gentlemen, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the Palestinian representative to the U.S. in Washington, and Yehuda Lancry, the Israeli ambassador to the United Nations, joining us from New York. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

LANCRY: Thank you. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT www.fdch.com

LOAD-DATE: July 11, 2003

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NBC News Transcripts

SHOW: Meet the Press (10:00 AM ET) - NBC

April 7, 2002 Sunday

LENGTH: 3095 words

HEADLINE: Hassan Abdel Rahman and Zalman Shoval discuss the crisis in the Middle East

BODY:

MR. RUSSERT: And we are back. Welcome both to MEET THE PRESS. Ambassador Shoval, why won't Prime Minister Sharon listen to President Bush and heed his request to stop the incursion and pull back?

MR. ZALMAN SHOVAL: Well, he certainly listens to him. And he has promised as Sharon said, "We're going to expedite the mission of the incursion," as you call it, "as soon as possible." We're going to consult with the president, with the secretary coming to Israel, but, you know, we don't want to do this again. We would like this operation to have as many results as possible. We don't want to be put in the position where we withdraw, suicide bombings go on, Palestinian terrorism resumes, and in a few weeks from now, we have to do this over again. And so we'd like to stop this as soon as possible as is appropriate, and I think that's what we're going to do.

MR. RUSSERT: The president said, "Now, without delay." You're not going to do that?

MR. SHOVAL: Well, I don't want to say, you know, what is a delay. We don't

want to delay. We don't want to delay. I mean, you know, we are an army of reservists. My son is in the army right now. We want them back home. We want our kids back home as soon as possible. We are not going to delay.

MR. RUSSERT: But you cannot continue this activity until Colin Powell arrives in Israel, can you?

MR. SHOVAL: Well, he's going to arrive pretty soon. I think we just heard the secretary. These are things he's going to talk about with the prime minister. We're talking about, you know, days till he comes there.

MR. RUSSERT: You would stop it for his arrival at least?

MR. SHOVAL: Well, I don't know. This is a military and political decision, not for me to take, but as I said, we don't want to have an extra moment of a military activity there if we can do without it. There's no doubt about it.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Rahman, you heard Secretary of State Powell say that Yasser Arafat should get on television, take advantage of this opportunity now to issue in Arabic a plea to all his people to stop terrorism, stop suicide bombing now.

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MR. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN**: You know, the Palestinian people have been living under legal military occupation for 35 years. It is the longest military occupation in history. There are fully 100,000 Jewish settlers who illegally settled in the Palestinian territories. In the eyes of the Palestinian people, this illegal military occupation is a systematic, constant terror directed against them and against their lives because it steals from them their dignity, their livelihood. This is in our view the problem that faces our relations with Israel. It is the occupation. In the last 10 days, we have a war carried on by Israel against all of the Palestinian people. This is not a police operation. This is a war conducted by the largest military in the Middle East and probably one of the largest in the world. The victims so far has been over 250 Palestinians killed, many of them are children and women. You have hundreds of wounded who are not being even aided because Israel stops the...

MR. RUSSERT: What about the victims of the Passover dinner? The Israelis that were...

MR. RAHMAN: Yes, we always condemned that. And President Arafat himself went on television immediately after, condemned and he promised to arrest anyone who is involved in that operation.

MR. RUSSERT: It is not lost on anyone that the suicide bombings have stopped since the Israelis went into certain areas and tried to root out the terrorists.

MR. RAHMAN: But I assure you, Tim, that this operation is turning the Palestinians much more hard, to become harder, and more extreme. Because so much pain and suffering--when you have people, civilians, for 10 days are under a state of siege and a curfew. You cannot buy milk for your children. Palestinians are herded into detention camp by the hundreds. Civilians are being at--homes are being demolished.

MR. RUSSERT: Are you suggesting that we're creating a whole new generation of suicide bombers?

MR. RAHMAN: Absolutely.

MR. RUSSERT: A whole new generation of suicide bombers?

MR. RAHMAN: If--let me--what I'm saying is if this continues and there's no hope for the Palestinian people to be able to live free like Americans are and like Israelis are, then what Israel is doing is really creating much more extremism and much more desperation in our region.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Shoval?

MR. SHOVAL: Well, you know, we are not free because we are not free from the threat of terror every day. Not just for the last 10 days and not just for the

last few months. There is a campaign of terror and murder. As the president said, "These are not martyrs. These are murderers, killing--targeting children, women, elderly people."

But Mr. Abdel Rahman and I--you know, we have been doing this for 12 years on and off, he and I. And what have these 12 years brought you? I've served under four different prime ministers, including Rabin. Six prime ministers since Oslo

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have offered compromise to the Palestinians. You might have had your statehood by now. Instead, you responded with terrorism. You responded with violence.

You have a difficult job, I realize that. But when is there going to be a Palestinian leadership which will say, "We want to live in peace with Israel. We want to compromise." But compromise has to be a two-way street. That is Israel's position all along. Or every prime minister, whether it was Shamir or whether it was Rabin or whether it was Peres or whether it was Netanyahu, indeed, Sharon, as well--we are not the enemies of the Palestinian people. We and the Americans, I think, are enemies of those who have decided that terrorism is the weapon to achieve political ends.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Shoval, let me show you a map of Israel, and I'll put it on the screen. And you'll see in the red is Israel proper, if you will. The orange areas--the Golan Heights, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip--are the so-called occupied territories, the land that Israel won in wars. Would Israel be willing to stop all settlements in that orange-shaded area as President Bush has requested?

MR. SHOVAL: Well, you know, this is part of the Mitchell plan. In stage three of the Mitchell plan, there's confidence-building measures. When they're met, Israelis settlements will be on the table. This is one of the things which is going to be discussed.

MR. RUSSERT: Would you be willing to withdraw completely from those occupied territories in terms of a peace agreement?

MR. SHOVAL: I don't think so. You'll remember President Reagan said that where Israel was all eight miles wide then, this very narrow waist, Israel could have been cut in two in 1967. People forget, "Why are we in the territories?" Because we were attacked.

MR. RUSSERT: So which territories would you want to keep?

MR. SHOVAL: I'm not going to specify that. And I wouldn't be able to specify that. But I'd say that settlements will not prevent reaching a peace treaty with the Palestinians, because they are not going to necessarily say where the border, the future border, is going to be. That is part of the negotiations.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Rahman, it's been widely reported that President Clinton brought together Prime Minister Barak and Mr. Arafat, Israelis agreed to give 95 percent of the occupied territories to the Palestinians and 5 percent of Israeli land to compensate for the 5 percent of the occupied territories they wanted to keep for some settlements. And they also agreed to allow the flag, the Palestinian flag, to fly over East Jerusalem, even though the city would be undivided. And Yasser Arafat said no.

MR. RAHMAN: Tim, first of all, this was not the offer that was made at Camp David. The offer that was made at Camp David would provide the Palestinians with 88 percent of the West Bank. And the 12 percent would be the Jewish settlements and the territories, in the Palestinian territories, and would be the aquifers, water aquifers, in the north and the south, and the borders with Jordan. In other words, what Israel offered at Camp David were three Bantustans that were unconnected. And we did not end the negotiations in Camp David. We

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continued the negotiations through January with the Israelis, and we made a great deal of progress until Mr. Sharon went to al-Haram al-Sharif with 1,000 armed men and provoked Palestinians, and even then the Palestinians did not respond violently to Israel.

MR. RUSSERT: OK, OK, what do you want? What do the Palestinians want?

MR. RAHMAN: We want a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza within the 1967 boundaries, which constitutes only 22 percent of historic Palestine; Palestine, in which I was born.

MR. RUSSERT: So let me put the map up. You want all those orange areas that are labeled West Bank and Gaza Strip.

MR. RAHMAN: Which is only 22 percent.

MR. RUSSERT: But that's what you, you want it all, you want it all?

MR. RAHMAN: Yes. Absolutely.

MR. RUSSERT: Is that doable, Ambassador?

MR. SHOVAL: I think this will have to be negotiated. We're not getting into percentages right now because I could make a case that Israel is only 20 percent of what originally the Balfour declaration has promised but this is really--any--we shouldn't really start with that. What is on the table is that Israel wants to make peace with the Palestinians. And I think that once we sit down with a responsible leadership, not the sort of leadership that President Bush has spoken about, when he said Arafat has betrayed the hopes of his own people. If there will be responsible leaders--believe me, I negotiated with Palestinians, I negotiated with the Jordanians. We came to an agreement. I was involved in the negotiations with the Egyptians. We came to an agreement. Unless Arafat understands that this conflict has to end--you know why he broke up the Camp David talks with Barak? Because he didn't want to sign an agreement which said, "End of conflict." The next morning the violence started. Barak was prime minister, not Sharon.

MR. RUSSERT: Let me show you, Mr. Rahman, what Yasser Arafat said, according to USA Today, in a televised address Saturday. This was right after--"as Palestinian terrorists launched suicide attacks in Netanya and Jerusalem, Arafat urged Palestinians to 'sacrifice themselves as martyrs in jihad (holy war) for Palestine," encouraging, in effect, suicide bombers. Let me just make this point.

MR. RAHMAN: Now...

MR. RUSSERT: Because it is very important. Then we read this, that the Iraqis changed their policy. "Under the new Iraqi payscale, decided on March 12, during an Arab conference in Baghdad, the families of gunmen [and others] who die fighting the Israelis will still receive \$10,000, while the relatives of suicide bombers will get \$25,000," an incentive, if you will, to upgrade yourself from a gunman to a suicide bomber. People should know that 50 percent, as you well know--50 percent of the Palestinian people live on \$2 a day, \$700 a year. Along come the Iraqis and say, "We'll give you 35 years' salary, just

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give--make one of your children a suicide bomber," and Yasser Arafat goes on TV and says, "Martyrs for jihad." What kind of leadership is that?

MR. RAHMAN: Tim, don't you think that this implication that we sell our lives for \$25,000, and we sell our children for \$10,000, is absolutely racist? Don't you think that we value our lives and the lives of our children like everybody else does?

MR. RUSSERT: Then why is Yasser Arafat saying, "Sacrifice yourself as a martyr to jihad"?

MR. RAHMAN: Wasn't Patrick Henry who said, "Give me liberty or death"? Why in America there are so many bumper stickers saying, "Live free or die," but Yasser Arafat cannot tell his people live free or die? Aren't we entitled to live as a free people? Can't we defend our country and our nation from an illegal, brutal foreign occupation like the Israeli brutal occupation of our people, who has denied us our very basic liberties and freedoms? I, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, have been in exile for 29 years. My father and mother died and I was unable to attend their funerals.

MR. RUSSERT: Why not do it at the peace table...

MR. RAHMAN: We were...

MR. RUSSERT: ...rather than through suicide bombings?

MR. RAHMAN: We want to, but the Israeli army is continuing to humiliate us; continuing--listen, in the last year alone, Mr. Tim, there were 34 Jewish settlements built under Mr. Sharon. Those are the statistics of the State Department. Anyone who wants to make peace with the Palestinians would not conduct the kind of war that Mr. Sharon is conducting today at the Palestinian people. He wants to break the will of the Palestinian people. And the Palestinian people understand that. Mr. Sharon wants to change the political landscape. This is not a police operation. This is a colonial war, and it has to be understood as such.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Shoval, there's been some interesting evolution in thinking. People in Israel were once opposed to a Palestinian state. Now they embrace the notion. Nine years ago, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was on this very program, and I asked him the following question:

(Videotape, September 12, 1993):

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Prime Minister, on Thursday, Yasser Arafat said the Palestinian state is at hand and the Palestinian flag will soon fly over Jerusalem. Is that accurate?

PRIME MIN. YITZHAK RABIN: Well, we are negotiating now only the interim agreement, and I assure Chairman Arafat that the Palestinian flag will not be over Jerusalem. Jerusalem will remain always united, under Israel's sovereignty, and our capital forever, the capital of Israel, the capital of the Jewish people. He can forget about it.

(End videotape)

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MR. RUSSERT: Now, Israelis seem willing to allow the Palestinian flag to fly over at least East Jerusalem, if it was part of a peace agreement, correct?

MR. SHOVAL: You know, the late Moshe Dayan said over 20 years ago, "If the Arab world comes to peace with Israel, real peace, there can be 20 Arab flags flowing and diplomatic flags in East Jerusalem." And I think what Mr. Rabin--the late Mr. Rabin said, is still true, in the sense that, you know, I might quote Mr. Peres, who said, "When Jesus walked in the streets of Jerusalem, what he saw on the Temple Mount was not the al-Aqsa mosque; he saw the Jewish temple." And--but this doesn't mean that we cannot come to an accommodation with Islam, not just the Palestinians, but with the Islamic world about their holy places. We don't want to run their holy places. This is not our business at all.

MR. RUSSERT: How do we get a cease-fire now?

MR. SHOVAL: If America will make it very clear--and I think that's the mission of Secretary Powell--to tell the Palestinians, "Look, you're going to blow it. You're going to lose everything you have already achieved over the last 10 or 20 years. You won't have a Palestinian state, unless you come to peace with Israel." I think President Bush said that a few days ago. The only chance for Palestinian statehood is in peace with Israel. Unless they do that,

the Palestinian people are going to continue to suffer, and they suffer. Mr. Abdel Rahman is right. They suffer mainly because of the mistaken policies of their leadership. I think if the Palestinians--leaders will understand that, there's a chance. There is no certainty, and I'll tell you why, because there are those on the Palestinian side who think that suicide bombings have worked, that they may hurt us, that maybe they're delaying American plans with regards to Iraq and so on and so forth. Hopefully, they will see better sense. Hopefully, but, I'm not, you know, I'm not convinced.

MR. RUSSERT: Is the dream of a free, vibrant, independent Jewish state vanishing?

MR. SHOVAL: No, I don't think so. I think our war for independence is still going on because on the other side, there are people who want to deny our independence, they want to deny us the right of having a Jewish state in that part. But Israel is strong, fortunately, and we will overcome that. Ultimately, the Middle East will be at peace because there is no alternative to either side.

MR. RUSSERT: Will the Israeli Cabinet allow Colin Powell to visit Yasser Arafat, if he wants to?

MR. SHOVAL: I don't know. I don't know. I've heard Colin Powell just say that he would like probably to meet Arafat and that's something the government will have to decide. I don't know.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Rahman, same question to you. What must be done for a cease-fire to be agreed to in the Middle East?

MR. RAHMAN: First of all, Israel implements resolutions of the Security Council, 1402, 1403, which President Bush reiterated to Mr. Sharon. They must halt the onslaught on the Palestinians immediately of the Israeli army and then we will reach a cease-fire and implement the Tenet and Mitchell but there has to be a light at the end of the tunnel. In other words, the Palestinian people

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must see that this disgusting occupation, illegal occupation of our territory must come to an end.

MR. RUSSERT: If Colin Powell says as a condition for him to meet with Yasser Arafat, Mr. Arafat must go on TV this week and say in Arabic, "Stop the suicide bombing, stop terrorism," will he do it?

MR. RAHMAN: I don't know, but let me say this. As long as the Palestinian people are being subjected to this military attack by the Israelis, I think it is very, very hard for any Palestinian leader to tell the Palestinians don't defend yourself. Remember that the tanks are in the streets of Nablus and Ramallah and the helicopters are shelling the refugee camps in Jenin and it is not vice versa. We are not shelling Tel Aviv and not are not in the streets of Haifa. They are in our streets. They are attacking us and we are defending ourselves. Once they withdraw, I assure you that we are very eager to reach a cease-fire. But let me say one thing also. You know, the Arab world put an initiative on the table. And that is 22 countries, normal relations in exchange for full Israeli withdrawal. I think this is the challenge for Israel.

MR. RUSSERT: To be continued. Ambassador Shoval, Mr. Rahman...

MR. RAHMAN: Thank you.

MR. SHOVAL: Thank you so much.

MR. RAHMAN: Thank you, sir.

MR. RUSSERT: Thank you very much.

And we'll be right back.

(Announcements)

MR. RUSSERT: We'll be right back after this station break.

(Announcements)

LOAD-DATE: July 30, 2002

Hassan Abdel Rahman and Zalman Shoval discuss the crisis in the Middle East NBC News Transcripts April 7, 2002 Sunday



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SHOW: Meet the Press (10:00 AM ET) - NBC

April 7, 2002 Sunday

LENGTH: 3095 words

HEADLINE: Hassan Abdel Rahman and Zalman Shoval discuss the crisis in the Middle East

BODY:

MR. RUSSERT: And we are back. Welcome both to MEET THE PRESS. Ambassador Shoval, why won't Prime Minister Sharon listen to President Bush and heed his request to stop the incursion and pull back?

MR. ZALMAN SHOVAL: Well, he certainly listens to him. And he has promised as Sharon said, "We're going to expedite the mission of the incursion," as you call it, "as soon as possible." We're going to consult with the president, with the secretary coming to Israel, but, you know, we don't want to do this again. We would like this operation to have as many results as possible. We don't want to be put in the position where we withdraw, suicide bombings go on, Palestinian terrorism resumes, and in a few weeks from now, we have to do this over again. And so we'd like to stop this as soon as possible as is appropriate, and I think that's what we're going to do.

MR. RUSSERT: The president said, "Now, without delay." You're not going to do that?

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MR. SHOVAL: Well, I don't know. This is a military and political decision, not for me to take, but as I said, we don't want to have an extra moment of a military activity there if we can do without it. There's no doubt about it.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Rahman, you heard Secretary of State Powell say that Yasser Arafat should get on television, take advantage of this opportunity now to issue in Arabic a plea to all his people to stop terrorism, stop suicide bombing now.

MR. HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: You know, the Palestinian people have been living under legal military occupation for 35 years. It is the longest military occupation in history. There are fully 100,000 Jewish settlers who illegally settled in the Palestinian territories. In the eyes of the Palestinian people,

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this illegal military occupation is a systematic, constant terror directed against them and against their lives because it steals from them their dignity, their livelihood. This is in our view the problem that faces our relations with Israel. It is the occupation. In the last 10 days, we have a war carried on by Israel against all of the Palestinian people. This is not a police operation. This is a war conducted by the largest military in the Middle East and probably one of the largest in the world. The victims so far has been over 250 Palestinians killed, many of them are children and women. You have hundreds of wounded who are not being even aided because Israel stops the...

MR. RUSSERT: What about the victims of the Passover dinner? The Israelis that were...

MR. RAHMAN: Yes, we always condemned that. And President Arafat himself went on television immediately after, condemned and he promised to arrest anyone who is involved in that operation.

MR. RUSSERT: It is not lost on anyone that the suicide bombings have stopped since the Israelis went into certain areas and tried to root out the terrorists.

MR. RAHMAN: But I assure you, Tim, that this operation is turning the Palestinians much more hard, to become harder, and more extreme. Because so much pain and suffering--when you have people, civilians, for 10 days are under a state of siege and a curfew. You cannot buy milk for your children. Palestinians are herded into detention camp by the hundreds. Civilians are being at--homes are being demolished.

MR. RUSSERT: Are you suggesting that we're creating a whole new generation of suicide bombers?

MR. RAHMAN: Absolutely.

MR. RUSSERT: A whole new generation of suicide bombers?

MR. RAHMAN: If--let me--what I'm saying is if this continues and there's no hope for the Palestinian people to be able to live free like Americans are and like Israelis are, then what Israel is doing is really creating much more extremism and much more desperation in our region.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Shoval?

MR. SHOVAL: Well, you know, we are not free because we are not free from the threat of terror every day. Not just for the last 10 days and not just for the last few months. There is a campaign of terror and murder. As the president said, "These are not martyrs. These are murderers, killing--targeting children, women, elderly people."

But Mr. Abdel Rahman and I--you know, we have been doing this for 12 years on and off, he and I. And what have these 12 years brought you? I've served under four different prime ministers, including Rabin. Six prime ministers since Oslo have offered compromise to the Palestinians. You might have had your statehood by now. Instead, you responded with terrorism. You responded with violence.

You have a difficult job, I realize that. But when is there going to be a Palestinian leadership which will say, "We want to live in peace with Israel. We want to compromise." But compromise has to be a two-way street. That is Israel's position all along. Or every prime minister, whether it was Shamir or whether it was Rabin or whether it was Peres or whether it was Netanyahu, indeed, Sharon, as well--we are not the enemies of the Palestinian people. We and the Americans, I think, are enemies of those who have decided that terrorism is the weapon to achieve political ends.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Shoval, let me show you a map of Israel, and I'll put it on the screen. And you'll see in the red is Israel proper, if you will. The orange areas--the Golan Heights, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip--are the so-called occupied territories, the land that Israel won in wars. Would Israel be willing to stop all settlements in that orange-shaded area as President Bush has requested?

MR. SHOVAL: Well, you know, this is part of the Mitchell plan. In stage three of the Mitchell plan, there's confidence-building measures. When they're met, Israelis settlements will be on the table. This is one of the things which is going to be discussed.

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MR. RUSSERT: Would you be willing to withdraw completely from those occupied territories in terms of a peace agreement?

MR. SHOVAL: I don't think so. You'll remember President Reagan said that where Israel was all eight miles wide then, this very narrow waist, Israel could have been cut in two in 1967. People forget, "Why are we in the territories?" Because we were attacked.

MR. RUSSERT: So which territories would you want to keep?

MR. SHOVAL: I'm not going to specify that. And I wouldn't be able to specify that. But I'd say that settlements will not prevent reaching a peace treaty with the Palestinians, because they are not going to necessarily say where the border, the future border, is going to be. That is part of the negotiations.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Rahman, it's been widely reported that President Clinton brought together Prime Minister Barak and Mr. Arafat, Israelis agreed to give 95 percent of the occupied territories to the Palestinians and 5 percent of Israeli land to compensate for the 5 percent of the occupied territories they wanted to keep for some settlements. And they also agreed to allow the flag, the Palestinian flag, to fly over East Jerusalem, even though the city would be undivided. And Yasser Arafat said no.

MR. RAHMAN: Tim, first of all, this was not the offer that was made at Camp David. The offer that was made at Camp David would provide the Palestinians with 88 percent of the West Bank. And the 12 percent would be the Jewish settlements and the territories, in the Palestinian territories, and would be the aquifers, water aquifers, in the north and the south, and the borders with Jordan. In other words, what Israel offered at Camp David were three Bantustans that were unconnected. And we did not end the negotiations in Camp David. We continued the negotiations through January with the Israelis, and we made a great deal of progress until Mr. Sharon went to al-Haram al-Sharif with 1,000 armed men and provoked Palestinians, and even then the Palestinians did not respond violently to Israel.

MR. RUSSERT: OK, OK, what do you want? What do the Palestinians want?

MR. RAHMAN: We want a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza within the 1967 boundaries, which constitutes only 22 percent of historic Palestine; Palestine, in which I was born.

MR. RUSSERT: So let me put the map up. You want all those orange areas that are labeled West Bank and Gaza Strip.

MR. RAHMAN: Which is only 22 percent.

MR. RUSSERT: But that's what you, you want it all, you want it all?

MR. RAHMAN: Yes. Absolutely.

MR. RUSSERT: Is that doable, Ambassador?

MR. SHOVAL: I think this will have to be negotiated. We're not getting into percentages right now because I could make a case that Israel is only 20 percent of what originally the Balfour declaration has promised but this is really--any--we shouldn't really start with that. What is on the table is that Israel wants to make peace with the Palestinians. And I think that once we sit down with a responsible leadership, not the sort of leadership that President Bush has spoken about, when he said Arafat has betrayed the hopes of his own people. If there will be responsible leaders--believe me, I negotiated with Palestinians, I negotiated with the Jordanians. We came to an agreement. I was involved in the negotiations with the Egyptians. We came to an agreement. Unless Arafat understands that this conflict has to end--you know why he broke up the Camp David talks with Barak? Because he didn't want to sign an agreement which said, "End of conflict." The next morning the violence started. Barak was prime minister, not Sharon.

MR. RUSSERT: Let me show you, Mr. Rahman, what Yasser Arafat said, according to USA Today, in a televised address Saturday. This was right after--"as Palestinian terrorists launched suicide attacks in Netanya and Jerusalem, Arafat urged Palestinians to 'sacrifice themselves as martyrs in jihad (holy war) for Palestine,' encouraging, in effect, suicide bombers. Let me just make this point.

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MR. RAHMAN: Now...

MR. RUSSERT: Because it is very important. Then we read this, that the Iraqis changed their policy. "Under the new Iraqi payscale, decided on March 12, during an Arab conference in Baghdad, the families of gunmen [and others] who die fighting the Israelis will still receive \$10,000, while the relatives of suicide bombers will get \$25,000," an incentive, if you will, to upgrade yourself from a gunman to a suicide bomber. People should know that 50 percent, as you well know--50 percent of the Palestinian people live on \$2 a day, \$700 a year. Along come the Iraqis and say, "We'll give you 35 years' salary, just give--make one of your children a suicide bomber," and Yasser Arafat goes on TV and says, "Martyrs for jihad." What kind of leadership is that?

MR. RAHMAN: Tim, don't you think that this implication that we sell our lives for \$25,000, and we sell our children for \$10,000, is absolutely racist? Don't you think that we value our lives and the lives of our children like everybody else does?

MR. RUSSERT: Then why is Yasser Arafat saying, "Sacrifice yourself as a martyr to jihad"?

MR. RAHMAN: Wasn't Patrick Henry who said, "Give me liberty or death"? Why in America there are so many bumper stickers saying, "Live free or die," but Yasser Arafat cannot tell his people live free or die? Aren't we entitled to live as a free people? Can't we defend our country and our nation from an illegal, brutal foreign occupation like the Israeli brutal occupation of our people, who has denied us our very basic liberties and freedoms? I, Hasan Abdel Rahman, have been in exile for 29 years. My father and mother died and I was unable to attend their funerals.

MR. RUSSERT: Why not do it at the peace table...

MR. RAHMAN: We were...

MR. RUSSERT: ...rather than through suicide bombings?

MR. RAHMAN: We want to, but the Israeli army is continuing to humiliate us; continuing--listen, in the last year alone, Mr. Tim, there were 34 Jewish settlements built under Mr. Sharon. Those are the statistics of the State Department. Anyone who wants to make peace with the Palestinians would not conduct the kind of war that Mr. Sharon is conducting today at the Palestinian people. He wants to break the will of the Palestinian people. And the Palestinian people understand that. Mr. Sharon wants to change the political landscape. This is not a police operation. This is a colonial war, and it has to be understood as such.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Shoval, there's been some interesting evolution in thinking. People in Israel were once opposed to a Palestinian state. Now they embrace the notion. Nine years ago, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was on this very program, and I asked him the following question:

(Videotape, September 12, 1993):

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Prime Minister, on Thursday, Yasser Arafat said the Palestinian state is at hand and the Palestinian flag will soon fly over Jerusalem. Is that accurate?

PRIME MIN. YITZHAK RABIN: Well, we are negotiating now only the interim agreement, and I assure Chairman Arafat that the Palestinian flag will not be over Jerusalem. Jerusalem will remain always united, under Israel's sovereignty, and our capital forever, the capital of Israel, the capital of the Jewish people. He can forget about it.

(End videotape)

MR. RUSSERT: Now, Israelis seem willing to allow the Palestinian flag to fly over at least East Jerusalem, if it was part of a peace agreement, correct?

MR. SHOVAL: You know, the late Moshe Dayan said over 20 years ago, "If the Arab world comes to peace with Israel, real peace, there can be 20 Arab flags flowing and diplomatic flags in East Jerusalem." And I think what Mr. Rabin--the late Mr. Rabin said, is still true, in the sense that, you know, I might quote Mr. Peres, who said, "When Jesus walked in the streets of Jerusalem, what he saw on the Temple

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Mount was not the al-Aqsa mosque; he saw the Jewish temple." And--but this doesn't mean that we cannot come to an accommodation with Islam, not just the Palestinians, but with the Islamic world about their holy places. We don't want to run their holy places. This is not our business at all.

MR. RUSSERT: How do we get a cease-fire now?

MR. SHOVAL: If America will make it very clear--and I think that's the mission of Secretary Powell--to tell the Palestinians, "Look, you're going to blow it. You're going to lose everything you have already achieved over the last 10 or 20 years. You won't have a Palestinian state, unless you come to peace with Israel." I think President Bush said that a few days ago. The only chance for Palestinian statehood is in peace with Israel. Unless they do that, the Palestinian people are going to continue to suffer, and they suffer. Mr. Abdel Rahman is right. They suffer mainly because of the mistaken policies of their leadership. I think if the Palestinians--leaders will understand that, there's a chance. There is no certainty, and I'll tell you why, because there are those on the Palestinian side who think that suicide bombings have worked, that they may hurt us, that maybe they're delaying American plans with regards to Iraq and so on and so forth. Hopefully, they will see better sense. Hopefully, but, I'm not, you know, I'm not convinced.

MR. RUSSERT: Is the dream of a free, vibrant, independent Jewish state vanishing?

MR. SHOVAL: No, I don't think so. I think our war for independence is still going on because on the other side, there are people who want to deny our independence, they want to deny us the right of having a Jewish state in that part. But Israel is strong, fortunately, and we will overcome that. Ultimately, the Middle East will be at peace because there is no alternative to either side.

MR. RUSSERT: Will the Israeli Cabinet allow Colin Powell to visit Yasser Arafat, if he wants to?

MR. SHOVAL: I don't know. I don't know. I've heard Colin Powell just say that he would like probably to meet Arafat and that's something the government will have to decide. I don't know.

MR. RUSSERT: Mr. Rahman, same question to you. What must be done for a cease-fire to be agreed to in the Middle East?

MR. RAHMAN: First of all, Israel implements resolutions of the Security Council, 1402, 1403, which President Bush reiterated to Mr. Sharon. They must halt the onslaught on the Palestinians immediately of the Israeli army and then we will reach a cease-fire and implement the Tenet and Mitchell but there has to be a light at the end of the tunnel. In other words, the Palestinian people must see that this disgusting occupation, illegal occupation of our territory must come to an end.

MR. RUSSERT: If Colin Powell says as a condition for him to meet with Yasser Arafat, Mr. Arafat must go on TV this week and say in Arabic, "Stop the suicide bombing, stop terrorism," will he do it?

MR. RAHMAN: I don't know, but let me say this. As long as the Palestinian people are being subjected to this military attack by the Israelis, I think it is very, very hard for any Palestinian leader to tell the Palestinians don't defend yourself. Remember that the tanks are in the streets of Nablus and Ramallah and the helicopters are shelling the refugee camps in Jenin and it is not vice versa. We are not shelling Tel Aviv and not are not in the streets of Haifa. They are in our streets. They are attacking us and we are defending ourselves. Once they withdraw, I assure you that we are very eager to reach a cease-fire. But let me say one thing also. You know, the Arab world put an initiative on the table. And that is 22 countries, normal relations in exchange for full Israeli withdrawal. I think this is the challenge for Israel.

MR. RUSSERT: To be continued. Ambassador Shoval, Mr. Rahman...

MR. RAHMAN: Thank you.

MR. SHOVAL: Thank you so much.

MR. RAHMAN: Thank you, sir.

MR. RUSSERT: Thank you very much.

And we'll be right back.

Hassan Abdel Rahman and Zalman Shoval discuss the crisis in the Middle East NBC News Transcripts April 7,
2002 Sunday

(Announcements)

MR. RUSSERT: We'll be right back after this station break.

(Announcements)

LOAD-DATE: July 30, 2002

SHOW: CNN SATURDAY MORNING NEWS 07:00

April 6, 2002 Saturday

Transcript # 040618CN.V28

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 1436 words

HEADLINE: Interview With **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Alon Pinkas

GUESTS: Alon Pinkas, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**

BYLINE: Kyra Phillips

HIGHLIGHT:

Israeli Consul General Alon Pinkas and Palestinian Representative to the U.S.

Hasan Abdel Rahman discuss the war in the Middle East.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

KYRA PHILLIPS, CNN ANCHOR: And joining me once again with their perspectives on the state of the Mideast crisis and the U.S. diplomatic mission to come, Israeli Consul General Alon Pinkas in New York, and joining us now by phone from Washington is Palestinian Representative to the U.S. **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

Gentlemen, thanks again for being with us.

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED STATES: Thank you.

ALON PINKAS, ISRAELI CONSUL GENERAL: Good morning, Kyra.

PHILLIPS: Mr. Rahman, I'll have -- we'll begin with you. We didn't get a chance to talk with you last hour or the hour before, so why don't we hear how you feel about Powell's visit, what you expect from Colin Powell, and indeed, do you think it's very important for him to meet with Yasser Arafat?

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RAHMAN: Well, we welcome the initiative by President Bush to send Secretary Powell. But I must say that the credibility of the seriousness of President Bush depends on his ability to put an immediate stop on this massacring by Israel of the Palestinians.

I'm sure that the public and your staff is watching the footages coming from Nablus, Ramallah, the refugee camp, where Israel is waging a war of annihilation against the Palestinian people.

If he is going to wait eight more days before demanding from Mr. Sharon to stop this massacre, I think that his credibility and the usefulness of his mission is going to be in question.

PHILLIPS: Mr. Pinkas, you want to comment on that point of credibility?

PINKAS: First, I would look, if I were Mr. Abdel Rahman, I would look up the word "annihilation" before I use it so liberally. He knows that it's not annihilation, and he knows that there are no concentration camps, which he accused us of a few days ago, and he knows that no matter how many lies you can use, at some point people are going to call your bluff.

And part of that is the -- you know, it astounds me, Kyra, to listen that the Palestinians are questioning the credibility of President Bush. I mean, the onus is on Bush from their point of view rather than on Arafat.

It's not about Bush's credibility, and it's not about George Bush's leadership, and it's not about his diplomacy. It's all about Arafat's credibility, his leadership style or lack thereof, and his total failure as a statesman to come up with the major decisions that had to be made a year and a half ago at Camp David.

I say this for the third time this morning. But it all goes back to Camp David, when they rejected an offer made to them, a comprehensive offer made to them that was fair, equitable, reasonable, practical, and realistic, made to them by then-Prime Minister Barak and President Clinton.

PHILLIPS: Zinni and Arafat, General Zinni did meet with Yasser Arafat. Mr. Rahman, let's talk about that, and do you believe that that is one step toward potential of peace here?

RAHMAN: Let me say something about the accusation that Mr. Pinkas launched at me and let fly. I think that no one lies on television more than Mr. Pinkas. And Mr. Pinkas have not said one truth so far in all the time that I have heard him. He twists all the facts, and he, in fact, never addresses any of the facts.

Let's look at the fact of this Israeli invasion of the Palestinians. There is a blanket bombing today of the cities of Nablus and Jenin, and it is on television. I'm not lying. Look at the reports coming from the region. There are hundreds of people killed, the whole Palestinian population today is under a state of siege. Sick people with (UNINTELLIGIBLE), they cannot go to hospitals. Children, they cannot go to their school. People cannot go to their supermarkets.

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There is a state of siege, which is reminiscent of what the Nazis did to Czechoslovakia the Second World War. Mr. Pinkas, regardless of how are you going to paint this aggression against the Palestinians, you stand alone, the whole world is outraged by those war crimes committed by Israel against the Palestinians.

You are going to tell me that the question, the credibility of the mission of Mr. Powell, I did not question the credibility of President Bush or Powell. I said the credibility and the seriousness of the mission, if you do not put an immediate stop on this massacre that's being carried on by Israel today against refugee camps, which are there because of the ethnic cleansing conducted by Israel when Israel was created, you moved everyone who was not Jewish out of Palestine in order to create a place for people like yourself and others who came from Russia, from Germany, from Czechoslovakia, and from Brooklyn, New York, to settle in the country of Palestine.

So don't talk about lying and credibility.

PINKAS: Kyra, what you heard now is an example of a -- the quintessential product of the Pal -- of the beautiful Palestinian education system. You could be wrong, we could disagree, we can have differences of opinion. He may be right, I may be wrong on a whole host of issues.

RAHMAN: But you started accusing me...

PINKAS: But the ignorance -- let me...

RAHMAN: ... of lying.

PINKAS: I'm not accusing you of being lying, I'm just...

RAHMAN: You said that.

PINKAS: ... exposing your lies.

RAHMAN: And therefore you have to watch your words.

PINKAS: Mr. Abdel Rahman, right next to where you live there are bookstores. I suggest you go there...

RAHMAN: Well...

PINKAS: ... and read, and read some, read some, read some history books, Mr. Abdel Rahman.

RAHMAN: Ah, I suggest you read the history books too.

PINKAS: If -- Mr. Rahman, if you avoid listening to Arafat's speeches and

reading the writings of Saddam Hussein...

RAHMAN: Hey, listen, don't give me (UNINTELLIGIBLE) about Arafat...

PINKAS: ... perhaps...

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PHILLIPS: All right.

PINKAS: ... perhaps...

RAHMAN: ... I don't want Mr. Sharon that. I don't think anybody...

PINKAS: Mr. Rahman, Mr. Rahman...

RAHMAN: ... Mr. Sharon is...

PHILLIPS: Let's, all right...

(CROSSTALK)

PHILLIPS: ... Mr. Rahman, let's let Mr. Pinkas respond. But I must say, I mean, the issue of this violence and the control and who's in charge and who do you turn to, I mean, for the first time this morning, I saw the videotape, and we ranned it. Now the media is being approached by Israeli soldiers and without explanation and wondering what's going on and being forced from certain areas, you're starting to -- you -- it is reaching a point I guess you don't understand until you feel it yourself.

And now the media, I think the journalists are really starting to see what is happening there on the ground, and it's hitting them.

PINKAS: Well, part -- you're right. Part of the problem is that in several of those areas, we've declared closed military theater of operations, we're closed to the media. And there were some instances were soldiers pushed journalists back or even fired over their heads, and we apologize for those instances. The last thing we want to do is to prevent journalists from doing their -- to perform their job.

I think that the media, that the media, international media, American media in particular, is gaining almost unparalleled to what we're doing. Otherwise, you'd have to believe Mr. Abdel Rahman that there are executions and ethnic cleansing and Nazi-like operations, and the rest of his inexcusable ignorant remarks.

The media is -- look, this is a military operation, Kyra, it is not a pretty sight. Mr. Abdel Rahman is right, they are under siege. But you know what? It's a price you pay for 75 suicide attacks since Camp David. It's a price you pay when, instead of respecting life, you glorify death and you idealize martyrs.

We don't have any interest in abusing or being unfair to the civilian population there. The last thing we want is to bring about a new generation of people who hate us or people who don't believe in the peace process. These people need to direct their grievances to the leadership that failed them, and I'm quoting President Bush, this is not my own idea here.

PHILLIPS: Alon Pinkas, Israeli consul general from New York, thank you very much. Also **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, representative to the U.S. for the Palestinian side. We appreciate you both being with us. We'll continue to follow this story, continue to follow debate, taking both sides and adding balance. TO ORDER

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CNN INTERNATIONAL

SHOW: INSIGHT 05:00 PM Eastern Standard Time

April 4, 2002 Thursday

Transcript # 040401cb.k01

SECTION: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL

LENGTH: 3862 words

HEADLINE: U.S. Steps Into Middle East Crisis

GUESTS: Hasan Abdel Rahman, Ra'anan Gissin, Tony Karon

BYLINE: Colleen McEdwards, Ben Wedeman, Major Garrett

HIGHLIGHT:

Plunging in after days of mounting criticism and violence in the Middle East,
President George W. Bush couples a critique of Yasser Arafat with a call for
Israel to withdraw its troops from Palestinian territories.

BODY:

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UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: The world finds itself at a
critical moment. This is a conflict that can widen or an opportunity we can
seize.

COLLEEN MCEDWARDS (voice-over): Plunging in after days of mounting criticism
and violence in the Middle East, the U.S. president couples a critique of Yasser
Arafat...

BUSH: The situation in which he finds himself today is largely of his own
making.

MCEDWARDS: ... with a call for Israel to withdraw its troops from Palestinian
territories.

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BUSH: I ask Israel to halt incursions into Palestinian-controlled areas and
begin the withdrawal from those cities it has recently occupied.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MCEDWARDS: Hello and welcome to INSIGHT. I'm Colleen McEdwards in for
Jonathan Mann.

"Enough is enough," the words of George W. Bush. In a dramatic about- face
Thursday, the U.S. president said he would send his secretary of state to the
Middle East next week to push for a cease-fire and perhaps much more. But Colin
Powell will face long odds. With the fall of Nablus Thursday, Israel now
controls six of the eight major West Bank towns, and Arafat remains under siege
at his headquarters in Ramallah.

On INSIGHT today, Washington's new push.

Now the Israeli government hasn't responded directly to President Bush's call
for an Israeli withdrawal, at least not yet. The office of Ariel Sharon did
issue a statement, though, saying Operation Defensive Shield is going to
continue. And it does.

There is heavy fighting between Israeli forces and Palestinian gunmen

reported in the cities and refugee camps of Nablus and Jenin. At least five Palestinians and two Israelis were killed in Bethlehem Thursday. The overall toll remains unknown, with hundreds of Palestinian gunmen engaged in a tense standoff at the Church of the Nativity.

As CNN's Ben Wedeman reports, the scene has become a virtual war zone.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BEN WEDEMAN, CNN CAIRO BUREAU CHIEF (voice-over): A convoy of ambulances ventures into Bethlehem's old city. An ancient city, that has become a battlefield.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We have an injured person to people (ph) from here. OK?

WEDEMAN: Before the Palestinian medic is allowed to pass, soldiers check him for weapons or explosives. The woman they picked up, ill not injured, was one of the lucky ones. Residents tell of others wounded in the fighting who bled to death in the streets, ambulances unable to reach them.

GRAHAM LEMAN, RED CROSS: Yeah, it is very difficult to work. You know, I'll make no excuses. It is difficult to work. I think you can see for yourselves the conditions that everybody has to work, and we ourselves have to work around that as well as best we can.

WEDEMAN: Easier said than done, people here say. All they can do is wait for their ordeal to end.

(on camera): Here in the old city of Bethlehem it's a scene of complete destruction. There are cars that have been run over, crushed by tanks; bullet holes in the walls, storefronts smashed out. And one interesting thing here,

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armored plating from an Israeli armored personnel carrier.

(voice-over): In this house, bullet smash the windows. A family of 10 is trying to get buy on dwindling supplies.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

WEDEMAN: That, and fear. "Yesterday the children were shivering with terror," says this woman. Nuns and workers prepare to deliver bread and flour to an orphanage home to dozens of children. This was the last batch of bread these nuns can bake. They've run out of supplies.

Near the Church of the Nativity, Israeli troops patrol warily. "Open the door," the soldier shouts. They have their own fears.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You see this? This is a bomb. You see this?

WEDEMAN: The bomb is a canister of cooking gas rigged to explode. The soldiers in the streets as insecure as the people in their homes.

Ben Wedeman, CNN, Bethlehem.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

MCEDWARDS: Well the U.S. president had some choice words for both sides in this conflict in his speech. Some where leaders are even predicting that it will be a turning point.

With more on what the president had to say, here's CNN's White House Correspondent Major Garrett.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MAJOR GARRETT, CNN WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Virtually alone on the world's stage in sympathizing with Israel's anti-terror raids, the president Thursday joined a global chorus calling for an end to the military assaults and new talks to obtain a cease-fire.

BUSH: Delay the foundations of future peace. I ask Israel to halt incursions into Palestinian-controlled areas and begin the withdrawal from those cities it has recently occupied.

GARRETT: Well the president bowed to other pressures, dispatching Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region.

BUSH: The world finds itself at a critical moment. This is a conflict that can widen or an opportunity we can seize.

GARRETT: But top administration officials concede Powell will bring no new ideas and has no firm agenda. What's more, Powell won't arrive until next week, much later than European and Arab critics of the Bush policy have been demanding.

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As to when Israel should withdraw, the president offered no specifics. A senior official said Israel should pull back, quote, "...as soon as possible."

Again, a far cry from immediately, which is the Arab and European standard.

Still, there's a sea change in the administration's Middle East policy. No more tacit support for the Israeli military and no more waiting for presidential envoy Anthony Zinni to negotiate a cease-fire.

LEE HAMILTON, WOODROW WILSON CENTER: The president has held back too long.

He now will energize his administration to tackle these tough problems in the Middle East. He's shifting his position on a number of key issues.

GARRETT: What pushed the White House? Many factors. Among them, protests like these in Jordan and Egypt. Egypt is breaking almost all government ties with Israel. Fears of a wider world and an Arab oil boycott.

It all adds up to pressure on Israel, but it didn't spell an end to tough talk about Arafat still under siege in Ramallah. In fact, the president used some of the harshest language to date to condemn Arafat's failure to stop terror attacks in Israel.

BUSH: The situation in which he finds himself today is largely of his own making.

GARRETT (on camera): The White House still considers Arafat the chief representative of the Palestinians. But that may change. A senior administration official said that while Powell hopes to meet with Arafat, he will also meet with others in the Palestinian movement. A clear signal that White House frustration with Arafat may be coming to a head.

Major Garrett, CNN, the White House.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MCEDWARDS: Well, for some more perspective now, we are joined by the Palestinian representative to Washington, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

Mr. Rahman, thanks for being here. Do you see a change in policy here in that the United States doesn't seem to be giving a wink and a nod, giving tacit support to Israel?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO U.S.: Well we welcome the call by President Bush on Israel to hold its aggression against the Palestinian people and withdraw its army from the Palestinian towns and villages, and the vision he put forward for a peace -- final peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis. The proof is in the pudding. We want to see results. We want to see that this call is respected by Israel and implemented before it is too late.

MCEDWARDS: Mr. Bush also had some strong words for Yasser Arafat, saying that he is not consistently "opposed or confronted terrorists," were his words. And he said that the situation that Mr. Arafat finds himself in today is largely of his own doing. I'd like to hear your response to that.

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RAHMAN: Well I think that President Bush is alone in this assessment. It is

nothing new. We disagree respectfully with President Bush.

We are the judge whether President Arafat has performed correctly or not. It is the Palestinian who will have to make that assessment. And the Palestinian people are all behind Yasser Arafat today, because the criteria for Mr. Bush are different from our criteria.

Our criteria is that President Arafat is leading the struggle of the Palestinian people for national liberation. And he has been doing this at the forefront of the Palestinian people for 50 years. And we are supporters of Yasser Arafat. We believe he is our leader and he has done a magnificent job.

MCEDWARDS: Did you hear anything in what Mr. Bush said today that would suggest to you that the U.S. is prepared to push for negotiations to move forward for a Palestinian state, as well as the security talks?

RAHMAN: I think it is too early to make a judgment on that, a conclusion. But I believe that if the United States does not move forward on the achievement of an independent Palestinian state, a final peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis, then Sharon, who is against peace, would have won.

Today we are at the very critical juncture. Sharon wants to change the political landscape of the region. He wants to sew the seeds of conflict for many generations to come.

I think this is not in the interest of the region, of the Israeli people or of America. And, therefore, it is incumbent on President Bush, and he has the power to change course and achieve something different from what Sharon wants the region to indulge in.

MCEDWARDS: Well, Mr. Rahman, what makes you think that Secretary of State Colin Powell would be any more successful at this than, let's say, the U.S. envoy Anthony Zinni?

RAHMAN: He should be successful, because if he is not successful, then again Mr. Sharon would have succeeded in defying his benefactor, the United States. Remember that Israel receives \$3 billion from the United States every year. Israel is using American weapons.

This -- all those F-16s and Apache helicopters and tanks that Israel is using to invade the Palestinian territories are American-made weapons. I think the amount of aid and political protection that the United States gives to Israel should make Israel respond to the interest of the United States. Otherwise, I don't know what to say about it.

MCEDWARDS: Mr. Rahman, we're also hearing that there's a great deal of frustration in the U.S. administration about Mr. Arafat because of his inability to crack down on terror, to crack down on the suicide bombings. And that there's even some talk about trying to find somebody else to negotiate with. And I'm wondering how concerned you are about that.

RAHMAN: Well, listen, if the United States wants to find somebody else, they will have to look for a long, long, long time. The Palestinian people have one

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address only, and that is Yasser Arafat. And anyone who is serious about achieving peace with the Palestinians has to deal with Yasser Arafat.

This is the consensus of the international community. There is only one exception, and that's Mr. Sharon. And I hope that the United States will side with the international community and not with this Sharon on this issue.

MCEDWARDS: But, Mr. Rahman, where has this Israeli military operation left Mr. Arafat, really? Realistically, in terms of his position as someone who can be at the table and negotiate?

RAHMAN: You know, this military aggression by Israel against the Palestinians, which is amongst war crimes, has been condemned by every single

nation in the world. You've just watched demonstrations all over the world protesting those crimes. The world is outraged by the Israeli crimes against the Palestinian civilians.

Yasser Arafat is the leader of the Palestinian people. Remember that Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in jail. And the (UNINTELLIGIBLE) of apartheid of South Africa is to call him a terrorist and a criminal. And they have eventually to reach a peace deal with him.

Sharon can do exactly what the (UNINTELLIGIBLE) South Africa said about Nelson Mandela. He eventually has to deal with him. And anyone who is serious about making peace with the Palestinians has to deal with the elected leader of the Palestinian people.

Remember that Yasser Arafat was elected by the Palestinian people in a free open democratic election in 1996. So if we respect the Israeli choice of Sharon -- although we consider Sharon a terrorist, but that's the problem of the Israeli public and they have to respect our choice of Yasser Arafat.

MCEDWARDS: All right. **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, thanks very much for your thoughts. Appreciate it.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

MCEDWARDS: And now for the Israeli point of view, we are joined by Ra'anan Gissin, a senior adviser to Ariel Sharon. Mr. Gissin, thanks for being here.

Mr. Bush called for a withdrawal from the Palestinian territories, a pulling back by Israel. Can you tell us whether or not that's going to happen?

RA'ANAN GISSIN, SR. SHARON ADVISER: Well of course it's going to happen when we accomplish the mission that we started, which is Operation Defensive Shield.

A result of the fact that Yasser Arafat, which adopted a strategy of terror and built a coalition of terror, did not lift one finger to stop terrorist activity.

Yesterday we buried the 26 victims of the Passover massacre, where the last of horrendous killings that took place, and after that, several more. We had no other choice but to go in, as the United States went to Afghanistan, in order to stop terrorism.

One thing that comes out in President Bush's speak, I think, which
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(UNINTELLIGIBLE) Rahman did not mention, is the fact that destroying terrorism and eradicating terrorism stands above anything else. It's not conditional.

There's no good or bad terrorism.

And if the Palestinians think that their brand of terrorism is an exception, then they are wrong. Maybe 160 nations around the world will support what the Palestinians do and say that this is the right thing because of occupation. But then again, there is one nation that they have to make peace with, and that's Israel.

MCEDWARDS: All right.

GISSIN: And as long as they use terrorism, there can't be a political process.

MCEDWARDS: All right, Mr. Gissin, but Mr. Bush also did say, "Enough is enough." So when will that -- when will that pullback take place? Will it take place before Mr. Powell visits the region next week?

GISSIN: I don't want to put deadlines. I believe that when we have accomplished the mission that Arafat was supposed to do -- in other words, eradicate the terrorist infrastructure, uproot it, arrest those wanted terrorists who are planning attacks against our citizens, collect illegal weapons. All things that Arafat was supposed to do.

When we will accomplish that mission, we will pull back ourselves. If the Palestinians want that to happen quicker, they know exactly what they have to

do. They have to take a stand against terrorism, not just by words, but by deeds.

MCEDWARDS: But, you know, Mr. Gissin...

GISSIN: And we are not going to sit back and wait until they do it.

MCEDWARDS: What Mr. Bush seems to be saying, though, is that the time for that particular kind of talk is over. That it's not up to one side or the other to know what to do to make it happen. That everybody has got to make it happen here.

GISSIN: We have proven many times already in the past along 10 cease- fires that were violated by Yasser Arafat that we were willing to pull back. We waved the wait of seven days of quiet. We were willing to go straight into the negotiations for a cease-fire under fire.

We accepted all of Zinni's proposals. We supported Zinni in every mission that he's done. And what did we get in return? More bloodletting. We're a bleeding nation, but we're still a nation that wants peace.

But in order to achieve peace, we came to the conclusion that terrorism must be uprooted. Without it, there is no hope for peace. And believe me, I'm not saying something that I invented. This is the words of President Bush.

And those who support the terrorists, those who finance the terrorists, those who give him shelter are as bad as the terrorists themselves. And Yasser Arafat

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-- regrettably, I must say -- answers all these three criteria.

MCEDWARDS: Mr. Bush was very hard on Mr. Arafat, had very strong words for him. But he also did talk about what he called the daily humiliation of Palestinians by Israelis. He called for that to stop. He pointed to some of the activities that take place at checkpoints, some of the things that have happened during this operation as examples of this daily humiliation of Palestinians.

Do you accept that that has to stop?

GISSIN: Yeah. We don't want the roadblocks there. You know why the roadblocks are there in the first place? Why did we have to impose those restrictions? They weren't there before that massive terrorist attack started with the suicide bombers, with the roadside explosives, with the car bombs that penetrated into our city. We had to stop that.

The first and foremost responsibility of any democratic government is to protect its people. And we suffered just in the month of March 122 innocent civilians. Men, women and children died at the hands of suicide bombers.

That's twice in relative numbers -- twice the number of people killed at ground zero in New York.

MCEDWARDS: Mr. Gissin, Mr. Bush also said that this ought to be an opportunity. That it can either be a chance for this conflict to widen, to get worse, or it could be an opportunity to seize. How, from the Israeli point of view, do you plan to seize this as an opportunity?

GISSIN: We're ready. Look, we have never given up on peace. We have never given up on General Zinni's mission. We continue to support it.

But this requires a real decision by the Palestinian people and the Palestinian leadership. They must decide which path they're going to take. Are they going to take the path to peace and eradicate terrorism, stop the incitement which sends 16, 17-year-old children to kill themselves and to kill Israelis. When you breed hatred it breeds more hatred.

The root cause of the Palestinian predicament is not the occupation, it's the hatred, the animosity. We are ready to open a new page. Are the Palestinians ready?

MCEDWARDS: What do you think Mr. Powell is going to be able to accomplish here that the U.S. envoy Mr. Zinni hasn't been able to?

GISSIN: Well I think after the following weeks that we have conducted this operation, the situation on the ground has changed dramatically. I believe that the power of the terrorists to hold the gun to the heads of those who want peace will be greatly reduced. And as a result of that, I believe that even in the Palestinian camp there will be those who can see clearly into the future and understand that peace is the only option.

And perhaps because of the fact that terrorism will no longer be an intimidating factor, they'll be coming forward and be willing to engage in fruitful dialogue that would lead to a cease-fire and to the implementation of

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Mitchell and Tenet and eventually to a political solution, which we all want.

MCEDWARDS: All right. Ra'anan Gissin, we'll leave it there. Thanks very much.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MCEDWARDS: Shortly after President Bush called on Israelis to withdraw its troops from the West Bank, the Israelis said they would allow U.S. envoy Anthony Zinni to meet with Yasser Arafat. And a meeting is scheduled for Friday.

Joining us now to talk about the U.S. involvement in the region is the world editor of TIME.com, Tony Karon. Tony, why is this happening now?

TONY KARON, TIME.COM: Well, Colleen, I think it's quite simple. The Bush administration really found itself having to respond to a crisis. It was clear that the previous positions were not stopping a descent into absolute chaos and anarchy that were threatening U.S. interests throughout the region.

And not only from the allies in the Arab world, but even the sense in the Bush administration that what was happening now might actually be burning the bridge back to peace, prompted the U.S. administration to actually recognize it simply had to come forward with a more forceful approach.

MCEDWARDS: Well, to what extent was this about international pressure as well? Because from the Arab world to France to Italy, there was harsh criticism of the U.S.'s sort of wait and see approach here.

KARON: I think it was plain to see for the Bush administration that the beneficiaries of the current upsurge would certainly have been primarily the likes of Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden. That the idea of isolating elements like that would really have been receding, as the Arab street in particular became more and more hostile to the U.S. as a result of what was happening in the Palestinian territories.

So that would certainly have played a role. But I think, also, there's a real sense that in the long term if the situation is allowed to spiral to the point that the peace process as a whole is destroyed, then U.S. interest in the long term is already imperiled, because that would really leave the Middle East in a long-term patent of low-intensity warfare.

MCEDWARDS: You know, Tony, we just heard CNN's Major Garrett report that even White House officials admit that the secretary of state is going there without really a mandate, without any new ideas, without an agenda. So how much should people really expect from this?

KARON: Well I think one doesn't go into the Middle East expecting success. One should go in expecting failure. And really, at this point, it's not as if someone's going to pull anything magical out of a hat. The Clinton administration people have been talking for a long time about how perhaps one of their major achievements was simply keeping the two sides talking.

I think, though, Secretary Powell is going in with something a little new in

terms of the intonation and tone of what President Bush said today. It wasn't

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simply talking about a cease-fire, an end to terrorism and so on. Obviously, a really strong emphasis on those things, but at the same time, putting forward that political horizon that many commentators and many mediators have insisted needs to be there. Talking about the settlements, talking about the need to end the occupation and so on.

So I think a sense in which the tone of the Bush administration is firming up to, to play both sides of what's needed here.

MCEDWARDS: All right. Tony Karon, we'll leave it there. Thank you very much.

KARON: You're welcome.

MCEDWARDS: And that is all the time we have for INSIGHT. I'm Colleen

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SHOW: CSPAN-1 Daily Schedules

April 4, 2002, Thursday 6:00

AM ET

NETWORK: CSPAN-1 Cable Programming

MEDIUM: Cable

LENGTH: 60 words

BODY:

START: 02.43.48

Situation In The Middle East recorded 04/04/02.

Sound Bites - John Brinkley, U.S. Inst. of Peace. Richard Kauzlarich, U.S. Inst. of Peace Muslim World Special Initiatives Dir. Nabil Fahmy, Egyptian Ambassador to the U.S. Farid Abboud, Lebanese Ambassador to the U.S. **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Palestinian National Authority.

END: 04.32.30

SEGMENT-ID: 11

PROGRAM-ID: cspn00040404

LOAD-DATE: May 14, 2002

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SHOW: America At War

April 4, 2002, Thursday AM ET

NETWORK: MSNBC Cable Programming

MEDIUM: Cable

LENGTH: 104 words

BODY:

START: 09.51

Mideast Crisis. The Israelis and the Palestinians both have their view about what is going on in the Mideast.

Studio Interview - Amb. Alon Pinkas, Israeli Consul General, says we have always said there has to be a political process at the end of this. He says the leadership failed to perform for the last year and a half.

Visual - Israeli Troops/ IDF Video.

Studio Interview - **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Chief Palestinian Rep., says Ramallah is his city and to see his people humiliated by the Israeli Army is hard for him.

Visual - Israeli Tanks. They debate the crisis in the Mideast.

END: 16.27

SEGMENT-ID: 6

PROGRAM-ID: msnbc0900.0404.6

LOAD-DATE: May 14, 2002

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Decides to Stay in Bed CNN April 4, 2002 Thursday



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CNN

SHOW: CNN WOLF BLITZER REPORTS 17:00

April 4, 2002 Thursday

Transcript # 040400CN.V67

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 8567 words

HEADLINE: Bush Sends Powell to Middle East; What Will U.S. Do With Another American Taliban?;
Morning News Mainstay Decides to Stay in Bed

GUESTS: Samuel Berger, Hanna Nasser, Saeb Erakat, Hassan Abdel Rahman, Ra'anan Gissin, Max
Robins

BYLINE: Kate Snow, Major Garrett, Christiane Amanpour, Ben Wedeman, Kathleen Koch, Walter
Rodgers, Kelli Arena, Garrick Utley, Elizabeth Cohen, Lou Dobbs

HIGHLIGHT:

President Bush announced he is sending Secretary of State Colin Powell to the Middle East. Then, the
United States has another American Taliban fighter on their hands. Finally, morning news mainstay
decides to stay in bed.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE
UPDATED.

KATE SNOW, GUEST HOST: Now, on WOLF BLITZER REPORTS: President Bush steps off the
sidelines.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Enough is enough.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SNOW: Sending in a heavyweight, the president warns the Palestinians, rips into Yasser Arafat...

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BUSH: The situation in which he finds himself in today is largely of his own making.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

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SNOW: And flashes a red light to Ariel Sharon.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BUSH: Halt incursions into Palestinian-controlled areas.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

SNOW: Israel opens a door in Ramallah, but clamps down everywhere else.

U.S. authorities have another Taliban American on their hands: What will they do with him?

And a morning news mainstay decides to stay in bed.

Hello. I'm Kate Snow in Washington, in for Wolf Blitzer tonight. Topping our news alert, a bold move by President Bush.

Saying the world is at a critical moment with an opportunity to be seized, President Bush today announced he is sending Secretary of State Colin Powell to the Middle East to seek a cease-fire between Israelis and Palestinians, an end to terror and an end to Israel's offensive there.

Israel is letting the United States get a head start on that peace mission, permitting Middle East envoy Anthony Zinni to meet with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, who has been besieged in his West Bank compound. Zinni's most recent mission was derailed by a wave of suicide bombings. He and Arafat are set to meet early tomorrow.

Still, there is no letup in Israel's offensive: Fighting rages on in the West Bank's largest city, Nablus, and tanks have now entered Palestinian areas in the divided city of Hebron. In another ancient town, Bethlehem, a standoff continues between Israeli troops and Palestinian gunmen, some of whom are holed up in holy places.

Saying there have been enough bombings, burials and tanks in the streets, President Bush has called on Israel to halt its incursions, pull back from West Bank cities, and stop its settlement activities. And, saying suicide bombers are murderers, not martyrs, the president has called on Palestinians to put an end to terrorism, accusing Yasser Arafat of betraying the hopes of his people.

With the president putting his power and prestige to work, the Bush administration seems to have cast aside any reservations about getting mixed up in the Middle East mess. Here is CNN White House correspondent Major Garrett.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MAJOR GARRETT, CNN WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Virtually alone on the world stage in sympathizing with Israel's anti- terror raids, the president Thursday joined a global chorus calling for an end to the military assault and new talks to obtain a cease- fire.

BUSH: To lay the foundations of future peace, I ask Israel to halt incursions into Palestinian-controlled areas and begin the withdrawal from those cities it has recently occupied.

GARRETT: The president bowed to other pressures, dispatching Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region.

BUSH: The world finds itself at a critical moment. This is a conflict that can widen or an opportunity we can seize.

GARRETT: But top administration officials concede Powell will bring no new ideas and has no firm agenda. What's more, Powell won't arrive until next week, much later than the European and Arab critics of the Bush policy have been demanding.

As to when Israel should withdraw, the president offered no specifics. Senior officials said Israel should pull back, quote, "as soon as possible," again, a far cry from immediately, which is the Arab and European standard.

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Still, there's a sea change in the administration's Middle East policy. No more tacit support for the Israeli military, and no more waiting for presidential envoy General Zinni to negotiate a cease- fire.

LEE HAMILTON, WOODROW WILSON CENTER: The president has held back too long. He now will energize his administration to tackle these tough problems in the Middle East. He's shifting his position on a number of key issues.

GARRETT: What pushed the White House? Many factors, among them protests like these in Jordan and Egypt, Egypt breaking almost all government ties with Israel, fears of a wider war, and an Arab oil boycott.

It all adds up to pressure on Israel. But it didn't spell an end to tough talk about Arafat, still under siege in Ramallah. In fact, the president used some of the harshest language to date to condemn Arafat's failure to stop terror attacks in Israel.

BUSH: The situation in which he finds himself today is largely of his own making. He's missed his opportunities, and thereby betrayed the hopes of the people he's supposed to lead.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

GARRETT: The White House still considers Arafat the chief Palestinian representative, but that may change. A senior administration official said that while Powell hopes to meet with Arafat, he will also see other Palestinian officials, a move to build bridges in case the administration has to cope with a post-Arafat era -- Kate.

SNOW: Major Garrett at the White House tonight.

Israel has made one gesture, allowing U.S. envoy Anthony Zinni to meet with Yasser Arafat in his besieged Ramallah compound, but does President Bush's peace appeal have any takers in the region? Let's go live to CNN's Christiane Amanpour in Jerusalem. Any encouraging response there from either side, Christiane?

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR, CNN SENIOR INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Well, yes, both sides are saying that they welcome President Bush's statement and his speech earlier today. From the Israeli side, there was an official statement put out by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, saying that they welcome President Bush's engagement to get a cease- fire from the Palestinians in order to lay the groundwork for a political process, which is in Israel's basic interests. They also said that they welcome Powell's mission here and they'll do everything possible to make it successful.

Now, from the prime minister's office, Ariel Sharon, word from there that Operation Defensive Shield will continue, he says, until Israel achieves its goal, saying that succumbing to suicide terrorism will only cause it to spread around the world.

We spoke to Israel's deputy defense minister a short while ago, and although the president of the United States did not appear to put any conditions on asking Israel to halt its military incursion and begin to withdraw, nor did he put a precise timetable on it.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DALIA RABIN PELOSSOF, ISRAELI DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER: We welcome the mission of Mr. Colin Powell, we will cooperate with him, but our withdrawal is -- won't be automatic and it won't be without any kind of agreement. We have a very bitter experience with one- sided withdrawal from Southern Lebanon.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

AMANPOUR: Now, with everyone watching and waiting to see what might be any tangible result that comes out of the meeting with Anthony Zinni and Yasser Arafat tomorrow, the Palestinian leadership, at least a senior member, has called President Bush's speech tonight a new and important step. Although Palestinian officials who we've been speaking to and seeking reaction from say that they hope that this military incursion will stop immediately.

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(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HANAN ASHRAWI, PALESTINIAN LEGISLATOR: Let's hope they stop this assault, this massive military assault against the defenseless and captive population immediately. This is a real test of American resolve and of Israeli intentions.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

AMANPOUR: Well, Israel's intentions were the same as they had been for the last week. The military invasion of the West Bank cities continues, and just ahead of President Bush's speech today, the latest town to see Israeli tanks and troops was Hebron on the West Bank. They have also taken over Nablus, that was in the short hours of this morning, and they have reported some gunfire from the Palestinian gunmen who were trying to resist the incursion into Hebron.

But also in Bethlehem, that standoff there continues at the Church of the Nativity between Israeli troops outside and Palestinian gunmen holed up inside -- Kate.

SNOW: Christiane Amanpour in Jerusalem tonight. Thank you.

When it comes to Middle East peace efforts, Clinton administration veterans could certainly say, "been there, done that." The previous president made every effort to bring Israelis and Palestinians to an agreement, and ultimately failed. So, what can President Bush expect?

I'm joined now by Samuel Berger, national security adviser under President Clinton. Thanks for being with us. President Bush took a real risk today, finally coming out, getting involved. You've been in the Oval Office at moments like this. What do you think pushed him over the edge to do that?

SAMUEL BERGER, FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER: Well, I'm glad the president did what he did today, but we're paying an enormous price for not being involved. We're having, in a sense, the worst of both worlds. The situation is getting worse, and we've been perceived as being disengaged.

SNOW: Did he wait too long?

BERGER: I'm glad he acted now. We're now in the game. I think the challenge now is to have a game plan that is likely to break this deadly cycle.

SNOW: He called on Israel specifically to withdraw from those Palestinian towns in the West Bank where they have recently moved in. Will Ariel Sharon listen to that, do you think?

BERGER: Well, I think it is more likely to take place in some sort of coordinated fashion. There are many Palestinians who believe that a strategy of terror can work and is working, and I suspect that Israeli withdrawal is going to come in some kind of coordinated fashion, with Chairman Arafat taking genuine steps to end the violence, and that has to all take place within a different context than we have right now.

SNOW: He didn't go easy on Chairman Arafat either. President Bush saying that he's betrayed the hopes of his people. Do you think that the administration can still deal with Chairman Arafat?

BERGER: I think they can and I think they must, even though, you know, he's difficult to deal with.

SNOW: He's the only guy in town.

BERGER: ... and has been certainly as a very much a part of this problem. But we certainly -- I think it is going to be very difficult for Israel to rout out the terrorists by military action alone. When 18-year-old young girls, as the president referred to, who are A- students engaged to be married, become suicide bombers, it's hard to envision how you root out the terrorists by military action alone.

SNOW: That said, this is such a tricky situation. Is it dangerous or risky for the Bush administration to even try to insert itself?

BERGER: No, the greater -- we have been paying a price for being perceived as not being engaged as the situation has spun out of control, as our strategic interests in the region have become imperiled, as our friends in the region, King Abdullah, the Egyptians and others are facing increasing instability and unrest.

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We pay a heavy price for not being engaged. I think the president made the judgment today that the risk of not being engaged is greater than the risk of being engaged.

SNOW: If you were back in your old position, Condoleezza Rice's position now, what would you tell Colin Powell to do first? What does he need to do once he gets there on the ground?

BERGER: I think the most important thing here is we have to change the dynamic so that Arafat, in fact, will order and act upon the order of stopping the terror. That's more likely to happen in coordination with the Arabs and the Saudis. And I think we have to say we're prepared to make a major initiative to build on the Saudi initiative, but the Arabs have got to deliver Arafat not only to their vision of peace, but also to create the conditions on the ground that will enable that peace to go forward.

SNOW: Sandy Berger, former national security adviser under President Clinton, thanks very much for your time. Appreciate it.

BERGER: Thank you.

SNOW: One of the holiest sites for the Christian world in the Middle East has turned into a battleground. The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem is now the site of a standoff between Israeli Defense Forces and hundreds of Palestinians who are seeking sanctuary inside. Today, Israel denied reports that its military had attacked that holy site. CNN's Ben Wedeman has the latest.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BEN WEDEMAN, CNN CORRESPONDENT (on camera): It is still not clear what exactly has happened at the Church of the Nativity here in Bethlehem this morning. The Palestinians and also people within the church itself are saying that a blast occurred -- several blasts occurred this morning in the area. One of them destroyed one of the church -- or rather one of the doors to the Church of the Nativity, which of course is historically believed to be the site of the birth of Christ.

Now, the Israeli army denies that any such event has occurred. We spoke to an Israeli army spokeswoman, who said that it is purely Palestinian propaganda. We spoke to soldiers on the scene who denied it as well. They say that they have no interest in going inside the church, and that they want to resolve the standoff peacefully.

However, when we tried to get to the church, we were told by the Israeli soldiers on the scene and also by a spokesman that we would not be allowed there. That it is dangerous, which it is. That it is a closed military area, and we were told to leave. So the controversy remains. No independent verification at this point what happened at the church.

Here in Bethlehem itself, it as ghost town, nobody out in the streets. It is the scene of some destruction, and you just heard that blast go off nearby. It sounded like a concussion grenade, another one going off as well. So, as you can tell, there's still some fighting, some danger here in Bethlehem, and that's where I am going to end it and leave this area.

I am Ben Wedeman, CNN, reporting from Bethlehem.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

SNOW: For more perspective on what's going on in Bethlehem, I spoke by phone a short while ago with the city's mayor, Hanna Nasser.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

Mayor Hanna Nasser, thank you for joining us at a difficult time.

HANNA NASSER, MAYOR, BETHLEHEM: Oh, it's all right.

SNOW: Tell us what is happening right now at the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem.

NASSER: You know, in general, relatively it is now calm in the city of Bethlehem, besides the Israeli troops all over the city searching from one house to the other.

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SNOW: There have been reports, sir, about the church that there are any number of people holed up inside. Is that still the case?

NASSER: You know, yesterday they (UNINTELLIGIBLE) municipality, which is really adjacent to the Church of Nativity. And, as you know, there are now few Palestinians inside the Church of Nativity. And yesterday, there were some efforts to give them some food and all that they need. And today, the Israeli troops -- Israeli army has blasted one of the side doors of the Greek Orthodox church at the (UNINTELLIGIBLE) street. But they didn't succeed in getting into the church so far. The Church of Nativity is besieged all together.

SNOW: The Israelis say, sir, that there are several, at least several armed people, they call them terrorists inside the church. They also say they're holding hostages. Is there any truth to that?

NASSER: You know, they are not holding any hostages. There are some gunmen and there are some others civilians inside. I don't know how many there are. But, you know, traditionally, the citizens felt safe and secure. They seek refuge into the church. This is what happened in 1967. Myself and my family in 1967 when this city was occupied by Israel army, we sought refuge in the Church of Nativity. So it is out of stress that we went to the church. Of course, I don't deny that there are some gunmen there, but the problem is now how to deal with that problem. The head of churches in Jerusalem headed by the (UNINTELLIGIBLE). They are now trying to find a way how to sort this problem.

SNOW: Is there anything that you can do, Mr. Mayor, to try to get them out of there? Are you negotiating with the Israelis, for example?

NASSER: You know, I am getting in touch every day with the delegate Apostolic of the Vatican, the ambassador of the Vatican in Jerusalem. Even this evening, I had a talk with him. He said they are negotiating now. There are some solutions to solve this problem. But, of course, I don't know the days, I don't know the offers, I don't know if they make anything of this.

SNOW: Mr. Mayor, I'm afraid we have to leave it at that. But I appreciate your time very much. Wish you the best of luck there in Bethlehem.

NASSER: Thank you. Thank you.

SNOW: Hanna Nasser, the mayor of Bethlehem. Thank you.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

For more analysis on the crisis in the Middle East, you can tune in to a special one-hour edition of LIVE FROM JERUSALEM with Christiane Amanpour. That's tonight at 8:00 Eastern, 5:00 Pacific.

Our Web question of the day: Do you think Colin Powell's Middle East trip can bring an end to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict? You can vote at cnn.com/wolf. And while you're there, let us know what you are thinking. There's a "click here" icon on the left side of Wolf's Web page. Send your comments and we'll read some of them on the air.

The Pentagon says one of the detainees at Guantanamo Bay is being moved to the United States because of evidence he has U.S. citizenship. The 22-year-old man, identified as Yasser Esam Hamdi, apparently was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. CNN's Kathleen Koch is following the story -- Kathleen.

KATHLEEN KOCH, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Kate, Pentagon sources had told CNN earlier today that U.S. military aircraft would be on the ground at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba at 4:00 p.m. today, ready to bring Hamdi to the United States. However now, this hour, it appears that the prospect of that immediate transfer is much less certain, but this is a quickly developing story. There are, though, a few things that we do know for certain about the so-called second American Taliban.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(voice-over): It was after the prison uprising at Mazar-e Sharif in late November that Yasser Esam Hamdi was taken into U.S. military custody in Afghanistan. Military sources say that from the start, he

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claimed to be a U.S. citizen. The Pentagon says it has taken while to sift through the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay.

VICTORIA CLARKE, PENTAGON SPOKESWOMAN: I don't know about the claims, but I do know it's been very hard with a lot of these detainees to determine their actual identification. Many of these people who were with the Taliban and al Qaeda were trained to resist interrogation.

KOCH: The justice department has a birth certificate showing Hamdi is 22 years old and was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Pentagon says his Saudi parents worked there, but returned to Saudi Arabia when Hamdi was a toddler. It is unclear whether he speaks English or if Hamdi ever returned to the United States.

Government sources say the department of justice is grappling with several legal issues, including the fact that he is accused of fighting for a foreign entity. Hamdi's situation has rapidly become a tug-of-war between the Pentagon and justice department, the Pentagon eager to turn him over to federal law enforcement because the military has no authority to charge U.S. citizens, and the justice department reluctant to take quick custody without knowing exactly what to charge Hamdi with.

CLARKE: The U.S. citizenship does make it a different case and a different kind of treatment. So they're working through those issues and saying, OK, based on these factors, what are we going to do with him and where does he go?

KOCH: Though Hamdi has been interrogated, it is unclear what he has told military officials. And the Pentagon says it is too soon to speculate what charges, if any, he may face.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

(on camera): Sources tell CNN that when Hamdi is eventually moved, at least this is our best information, that he would be first brought to Dulles Airport in northern Virginia. That for jurisdictional reasons, so that he could then face trial in the same federal court in Alexandria, Virginia where the other American Taliban, John Walker Lindh, will be facing charges.

After that then, sources tell us that Hamdi will go to the naval base in Norfolk, Virginia and remain at least for now in military custody -- Kate.

SNOW: Pardon me, Kathleen. Thanks. We were getting word of some breaking news coming in. Thank you to Kathleen Koch.

Some breaking news coming in, and I believe we have Saeb Erakat, the chief Palestinian negotiator on the phone now to give us some response from Yasser Arafat directly to President Bush's statement from earlier today. Are you there Mr. Erakat?

SAEB ERAKAT, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: Yes.

SNOW: Can you tell me what the response has been from Yasser Arafat?

ERAKAT: Well, just now, he just was with me on the phone answering me the following statement, that President Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian leadership are committed to the peace process and committed to the immediate implementation of security council resolution 1402. And we repeat our commitment to implement the George Tenet understanding and the Mitchell Report and also the Oslo Accords, which we signed with our late partner, Yitzhak Rabin.

We are also committed to the statement of President Bush without condition and also to Prince Abdullah, his Royal High Excellence Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, which became now an Arab initiative. We should not be blamed for facing this Israeli aggression on our people, our towns and our refugee camps and defending our people.

Once again, we welcome to the declaration of President Bush to stop the Israeli military incursion into the Palestinian land and to have a full cessation of settlement activities and to immediately end the closures and siege and immediate withdrawal from the Palestinian territories, which were reoccupied without any condition, and to stop the aggression against the holy Christian and Muslim places, especially

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what's going on against the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem at this particular time, and also to stop all actions of the Israeli army.

SNOW: Mr. Erakat, can you tell us more about where Mr. Arafat is at this point? I assume he's still in the compound. How is he doing?

ERAKAT: Well, he is besieged in his compound. There are barbed- wires around his compound. We managed today after the intervention of the Americans, actually General Zinni and the consul general and others to get some bread, some water, some medical supplies to him. The situation is very, very difficult. The situation is very, very dangerous. And the other parts of the West Bank now, there are a, you know, very serious situation in Bethlehem, in Jenin, in Nablus and Israeli tanks have begun an incursion of some parts of Hebron, not all of Hebron yet.

SNOW: And does he want to meet with Mr. Powell, with Secretary Powell when he's there tomorrow?

ERAKAT: Absolutely. President Arafat said that he welcomes Secretary Powell and he is willing to meet with him and to put the mechanisms to implement all what was specified in President Bush's speech, including resolution 1402, the Tenet understanding, the George Mitchell Report and the meaningful negotiation that would lead to ending the Israeli occupation and to the establishment of a Palestinian state next to the state of Israel.

SNOW: Saeb Erakat, chief Palestinian negotiator, on the phone with us, appreciate your time. He called in to tell us about Yasser Arafat's statement, reaction to President Bush. Mr. Arafat saying that he welcomes President Bush's words, that he is onboard, fully wants to cooperate and try to push for peace, is willing to meet with Colin Powell, Secretary Powell, on his way to the region. We expect to hear more on this as the night progresses, but that's the reaction, at least initially, of Yasser Arafat, still holed up in his compound in Ramallah.

A plot to kill: Afghan officials uncover a plan to murder Afghan leaders and American troops.

A missed opportunity for U.S. authorities. Why did a warning from the Russian government about spy Robert Hanssen get disregarded?

And Bryant Gumbel says good bye to the "CBS Early Show." We'll have the inside scoop on that. First, today's "News Quiz."

Who was Bryant Gumbel's first morning show co-host: Barbara Walters, Jane Pauley, Katie Couric or Diane Sawyer? We'll have the answer when we come back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

SNOW: Yasser Arafat, just a few moments ago, through a statement through his chief Palestinian negotiator telling CNN that he accepts what President Bush said earlier today, that he is willing to work with the president, willing to meet with Colin Powell, we're told, and wants to work toward peace. We're getting more information on that as things progress here tonight.

In the meantime, going back to another story, the interim government of Afghanistan says it has uncovered a plot to kill interim leader Hamid Karzai, former king Zahir Shah, American troops and international peacekeepers. CNN senior international correspondent Walter Rodgers has the details from Kabul.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

WALTER RODGERS, CNN SENIOR INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT (on camera): The Afghans originally arrested about 300 or 350 men suspected of plotting against the government here. They are supporters of the renegade warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (ph).

Since then, however, the Afghans have released all but 160 of those alleged conspirators. Those men, however, are suspected of plotting the assassination of interim Afghan leader Hamid Karzai and of the

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exiled king Zahir Shah. Now, the interior ministry here says it has recovered documents and explosives all pointing to terrorism, sabotage, kidnapping and abductions.

And it was not just Afghan government officials who were targeted in this by these renegade Islamic forces. It was also Americans here in Afghanistan and the international peacekeepers here. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is himself still on the loose. It is believed he's hiding somewhere west of Herat along the border with Iran. He has an extremely bloody reputation in this part of the world as a meddler and a spoiler in Afghan politics. Again, he is a wanted man here in Afghanistan.

But the investigation is just beginning into this conspiracy. One of the questions that is certainly going to be asked was, was there any foreign involvement in the attempt to overthrow the Karzai government here in Kabul.

Walter Rodgers, CNN, Kabul.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

SNOW: There's another strange twist in the case of Robert Hanssen. Years before the FBI agent was arrested on charges of spying for Moscow, turns out the United States may have received a warning about his activities from the Russian government. CNN justice correspondent Kelli Arena reports.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

KELLI ARENA, CNN JUSTICE CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): In his 25- year service with the FBI, Robert Hanssen did more damage to U.S. intelligence than any other spy. A new report says his main motivation was money, but it also says the agency he betrayed shares the blame for the security breach.

The report, by former FBI and CIA director William Webster, includes shocking new details. For example: Eight years before Hanssen was arrested for espionage, Russia lodged a formal complaint with U.S. officials that an FBI agent tried to sell secrets to a Russian intelligence officer.

ROBERT MUELLER, FBI DIRECTOR: There isn't an agent or an analyst or a support person in the FBI that isn't as sickened and horrified by Hanssen.

ARENA: The report concludes Hanssen slipped under the radar because of a serious lack of internal security, antiquated computers and a fractured management system. Webster told CNN, quote, "in every area of security, the FBI's system was lacking." But, he says the report is not meant to be accusatorial, but rather to, quote, "be helpful and identify where the FBI fell behind." The FBI has made some changes post-Hanssen, including a \$400 million computer system upgrade.

MUELLER: We have a polygraph program, which will be expanded. We have audit procedures for our current investigative programs that have been upgraded. We are doing reinvestigations on a schedule. We are hiring security officers.

ARENA: But the Webster report says it needs to do even more. While the FBI has already polygraphed 700 employees and plans on expanding the program, the report suggests testing employees every five years, an idea the FBI has yet to embrace. The report suggests aggressive financial auditing of agents. FBI Director Robert Mueller says he will consider that carefully.

It also proposes limiting the number of agents with top-secret clearance, a move the director says would get in the way of fighting crime. It's not the first time the FBI has heard many of these recommendations.

DAVID MAJOR, FORMER FBI COUNTERINTELLIGENCE AGENT: The bureau has been studying almost everything in the Webster Commission for years.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

ARENA: We just got a copy of the Webster report.

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To give you an idea of the seriousness of the problem, the Webster report describes a -- quote -- "pervasive inattention to the security, which has, at best, been a low priority." And, in a statement just issued, Attorney General John Ashcroft says that the report presents an opportunity to make substantial improvements." Now, as for Robert Hanssen, he was interviewed for the report. He even offered some suggestions.

And, Kate, he faces sentencing next month.

SNOW: Kelli Arena, thanks.

Tackling a taboo subject: cousins marrying cousins. The result of a new study may surprise you. A major change at Chicago's Wrigley Field will affect the way many Cubs fans view their team this baseball season. And later, trapped in a tree: a rescue story you won't want to miss.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

SNOW: Does the latest U.S. peace initiative to the Mideast really stand a chance?

Joining us to discuss today's developments are Hassan Abdel Rahman, the chief Palestinian representative to the United States; and Ra'anan Gissin, senior adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Gentlemen, let me start by recapping something that we just learned a few moments ago: a statement out of Yasser Arafat saying that Mr. Arafat and the Palestinian leadership are committed to the peace process as laid out today by President Bush. He says they are committed to the statement of President Bush without conditions.

Mr. Rahman, can you interpret that for us a little bit? What does Mr. Arafat mean by, "We're committed, but without conditions"?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO UNITED STATES: Well, President Bush spoke of the Resolution 1402, the implementation of that resolution, which calls on Israel immediately to halt its aggression against the Palestinians and withdrawal troops from the Palestinians' towns and villages, and then move to implement the Tenet understandings and the Mitchell report, leading to a political horizon, a political agreement, political negotiations.

That is what President Arafat is saying. We accept that without any amendments or modifications.

SNOW: But he is not renouncing terrorism, which is, essentially, what the president asked him to do today.

RAHMAN: Well, Yasser Arafat has in the past, continues to oppose any act of violence that targets civilians.

Yasser Arafat -- today, the Palestinian people are a subject of a very serious, widespread, overall aggression by Israel in the Palestinian territories. No one can tell the Palestinian people today, as long as the Israeli tanks and the Israeli army is invading Palestinian towns, killing Palestinian people, destroying Palestinian homes, to not defend themselves.

SNOW: Let me give Mr. Gissin a chance to respond to that.

And, also, Mr. Gissin, will Israel respond to President Bush by withdrawing its troops?

RA'ANAN GISSIN, SENIOR SHARON ADVISER: Well, first of all, let me say that, while Arafat says that he is committed to peace, why not, for a change -- he has said that many times. And every time he said that, there was another wave of terrorist activity.

Why not turn to his own people and tell them to stop committing suicide, to stop sending those suicide bombers, which he incites, and, by the way, which is financed by Iraqi money, but the checks are signed by Yasser Arafat? I have a document here that we captured at the Mukatai (ph) in his headquarters, which shows exactly that Yasser Arafat signed those checks that goes to those martyrs or to their families or to those who support them.

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The man ran a terrorist organization. So, the least that he can do is turn to his people right now, if he is really committed, and say, "Stop the violence; stop terrorism," and he himself stop the incitement.

SNOW: But isn't it at least a positive step that Mr. Arafat is saying, I embrace what President Bush has offered up here; I want to make peace"? Isn't that a positive step?

GISSIN: You know how times he has said that? And what did we get in return? Wave after wave of terrorist activity.

We are sick and tired of words. He initiated this campaign 18 months ago. If there is anyone to be blamed, if the Palestinians want to point a finger at anyone who is to be blamed for their predicament today, it is Yasser Arafat; 18 months ago, they were an inch away from a state.

The prime minister of Israel, el-Barak, offered them the kind of concessions and the kind of compromise for a state that no other prime minister ever offered, and I think no one will offer them again because of this murderous attack that they are launching. And now Yasser Arafat comes and, instead of turning to his people in his own language and calling for a cessation of violence, of terrorism, turns around and says, "Yes, I'm committed to peace, but the Palestinians," he said, "have a right to resist occupation."

We did not occupy those areas 18 months ago. How come our tanks are in Ramallah and in Nablus? Why are we there? Did anyone stop and ask themselves?

SNOW: Mr. Rahman, the president today was very hard -- President Bush was very hard on Mr. Arafat. He had some strong language. Do you think that there is trust there? Do you think President Bush and the Americans trust Mr. Arafat? Or do you maybe need to get someone else to speak for Palestinians?

RAHMAN: Well, first of all, let me just make a few remarks about what Mr. Gissin just said.

Remember, Mr. Gissin, that this occupation, which is in itself a perpetual act of terror against the Palestinians, is lasting the longest military occupation in modern history; 35 years the Palestinian people are living under your terror. You are terrorizing our people, stealing our land, humiliating our people for 36 years.

In the last 18 years, you intensified your crimes against the Palestinian people. You killed 1,500 Palestinians; 450 of them are children under the age of 16, 80 women. And you continue to do it every day.

Tell me, how is your security served, Mr. Gissin, by not allowing the Palestinians to bury their dead, and bury them in mass graves? Remember when the last time mass graves were used? They were used in Kosovo. And Milosevic today is tried as a war criminal. Mr. Sharon is doing exactly the same thing.

How can you speak about terrorism when the Palestinian people today, 3.5 million children, women sick, cannot even move out of their homes? You are telling us that we brought this, us, on to ourselves because we did not accept the generous proposal made by Mr. Barak to us. The challenge to you today is, there is a plan put forward by President Bush. Are you going to accept it or not? This is the challenge.

SNOW: Let's give him a chance to respond. Let's give him a chance to respond.

And, Mr. Gissin, I want to get one last question to you also. Will you allow Yasser Arafat to meet with Secretary Powell when he is in the Middle East?

GISSIN: Look, I want to make it very clear. And let's set the historical record straight; 35 years of so-called occupation were preceded by 120 years of Palestinian-Arab terrorism against Jews in this land, in their ancestral homeland.

And the reason is because Mr. Abdel Rahman and the rest of the Palestinian people don't accept the fact that the Jews have a right to this land, the same as the Palestinians have. They never accepted it. They said "We recognize Israel" because of its might.

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Now, with regard to Yasser Arafat, I can assure you one thing. He will remain confined to his quarter as long as terrorism continues to reign. When terrorism does not reign any longer, when we have eradicated the terrorist infrastructure, arrested those who conduct terrorist activity -- something that the representative of Abdel Rahman should have done by themselves, because they pledged to do it -- then we can consider changing his status.

SNOW: Sir, does that mean that Colin Powell can't go into the compound and meet with him? You won't allow that?

GISSIN: Who said that Colin Powell wants to go in and meet with him? First ask Colin Powell whether he wants to meet with him under those conditions, when Arafat violates every agreement he signed.

First of all, before there is going to be any meeting, Arafat has to prove himself, don't you think so?

SNOW: Ra'anan Gissin, a senior Sharon adviser, and also Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief Palestinian representative to the United States, I thank you both for being with us.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

SNOW: The Middle East conflict, of course, thousands of miles away, but with every act of violence and every cry of despair, America is being drawn more deeply into the search for a solution. It is not the first time the country has been down this road.

CNN's Garrick Utley takes a look.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GARRICK UTLEY, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): It is about people, the conflict and carnage we have been witness to, the dead, the wounded, the frightened.

And now, as the United States tries to stop the violence, the focus will be on two particular people, the leaders who have fallen short or gone too far: Yasser Arafat, who George Bush blames for failing to stop the suicide bombings; and Ariel Sharon, who, in the words of the president, has gone too far in humiliating the Palestinians.

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I expect better leadership. And I expect results.

UTLEY (on camera): A sharp rebuke from the president, and right on target, for the job of leaders, of course, is to control the passions and the anger of their people, however justified, and lead, to make a bad situation better. It is that asking for too much in the Middle East?

(voice-over): We remember this hopeful moment, when leaders worked for peace and shook hands and Nobel Prizes were handed out. And there was that earlier image, as Israel and Egypt agreed to make peace. But they needed special help from the United States.

Following the Middle East war in 1973 and the Camp David agreement, a demilitarized Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egypt. And American troops were placed in the middle to guarantee the peace between the two countries. They are still there more than 20 years later.

Placing American troops between Palestinians and Israelis is the last thing the Bush administration wants to do. They would become targets for extremists on both sides. But security for Israelis and Palestinians is now issue one. The idea of an international force, including Americans, to separate the two sides is being heard more frequently, if not yet from the president.

BUSH: The world finds itself at a critical moment. This is a conflict that can widen. America is committed to ending this conflict and beginning an era of peace.

UTLEY (on camera): Which raises the question: How committed is the United States to ending the violence between Israelis and Palestinians? How far is George Bush prepared to go in his leadership? Would he commit American troops to guarantee a peace if both sides agreed to it?

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(voice-over): For decades, that has been the unthinkable. We may be getting to the point where it is the unavoidable.

Garrick Utley, CNN.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

SNOW: In many states, first cousins marrying each other is illegal. But is it harmful to their children? Wait until you hear what the research says. Later, the face you may soon miss waking up to: Why is Bryant Gumbel leaving? And a picture that gives new meaning to the phrase "camping out in the forest."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

SNOW: Earlier we asked: "Who was Bryant Gumbel's first morning show co-host?" The answer is Jane Pauley. Gumbel took over as co-host of NBC's "Today Show" in 1982, when Tom Brokaw became the anchor of the "NBC Nightly News." Bryant hosted "The Today Show" for 15 years before signing on with CBS.

After more than two years of co-hosting "The Early Show" on CBS, Bryant Gumbel says, of course, it is time for him to move on. Today, he announced he will be leaving the network to pursue other interests.

Joining us now to talk about the impact of Gumbel's departure is Max Robins, the senior editor of the "TV Guide."

What is the story behind him leaving?

MAX ROBINS, SENIOR EDITOR, "TV GUIDE": Well, it depends on who you talk to, Kate.

One side -- and this is more coming out of CBS -- is that Gumbel wanted too much money in order to stay and to keep getting up early in the morning. From the Gumbel camp, you're hearing that CBS wanted a long-term commitment, at least three years, and Gumbel, at this stage in his life, just didn't want to give them that kind of commitment. My guess is, the truth lies somewhere in between.

SNOW: As usual.

Is he going to be missed, do you think?

ROBINS: Bryant has been a fixture of morning television for a long time. But the fact is that, while ratings did improve a little bit while he was there, the CBS show remains a distant third. And, I don't know. I mean, he is not going to be that missed. It is not as if Diane Sawyer left "GMA" or Katie Couric decided it was time to leave "The Today Show."

SNOW: He has a reputation, doesn't he, for being a little bit difficult to work with? I don't know if that is deserved or not.

ROBINS: Well, I think anybody in those jobs who has been doing it for a long time, they can be demanding. I think they all have that red light disease, when that little light in front of the camera goes on.

But Gumbel is a professional. And, look, he has another gig over at HBO doing "Real Sports." I guess he just decided, if they weren't willing to really increase his salary, it wasn't worth it to him to keep getting up so early in the morning for the No. 3 show.

SNOW: Right. Who do you think will be their new star, then? Do they go after another male, or what do they do?

ROBINS: Come on, Kate. I have got a column I have to fill myself.

(LAUGHTER)

ROBINS: But some names that have been bandied about include John Roberts, who fills in for Dan Rather on the evening news. I've heard the name Jack Ford, who has on the bench at ABC, who has done

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morning show duties at "GMA" and "The Today Show." Those are a couple names you are hearing. I'm not convinced it is going to be either one of those.

SNOW: Max Robins, senior editor with "TV Guide," thanks for giving us a little insight on Bryant Gumbel's departure.

ROBINS: Thanks, Kate.

SNOW: Sure.

A story that is very taboo coming up: cousins marrying cousins. A controversial story reaches a surprising conclusion. Later: stuck in a tree like you've never seen before -- and news of an asteroid on a collision course with Earth. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

SNOW: On our "Newswire": Chicago Cubs fans will notice a change at Wrigley Field this year. Black wind screens have gone up in the back of the outfield bleachers. Team officials say it is a security measure, but critics suggest maybe it's an attempt obscure the view of nonpaying spectators that sit on nearby rooftops.

Two men spent the night trapped above ground after their single-engine Cessna crashed into a tree in California's Cleveland National Forest. The men were unhurt, but it took a sling lowered from a helicopter to get them off that plane and back on the ground.

A half-mile-wide asteroid is heading toward the Earth, but it may be a little premature to review your life insurance. Scientists say there is only one chance in 300 that it would even hit the Earth. And, even if it did, it is not due for another 878 years.

We have all heard the crude jokes. We have all heard the warnings. But a new study indicates first cousins who marry do not run a big risk of having children with birth defects.

CNN medical correspondent Elizabeth Cohen joins us from CNN Center in Atlanta.

Elizabeth, so the deal is here that first cousins who have a child together are not putting that child at risk?

ELIZABETH COHEN, CNN MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT: Kate, the bottom line is that they are putting them at a slightly, slightly higher risk, but that it is very slight. And the reason why I think so many of us have a hard time believing it is that there is a big sort of "ick" factor in this story, for want of a better word. It just seems so unbelievable.

But let's take a look at what hard science tells us in a new study that has just come out. And that is that, when people who are not related have a child, they have a 3-4 percent chance of that child having some form of a birth defect. However, when two first cousins have a child, that risk is indeed, increased, but it increases to 5-7 percent.

So, yes, is that an increase? Sure, it is an increase, but what the genetic counselors are saying in this story is: "You know what? The increase isn't that huge. And so we shouldn't be telling first cousins not to marry. Instead, we should be saying, you know what? Go seek a genetic counselor and ask them for help. But why should we be barring people just because of this slight increase?"

SNOW: It is illegal in some states, though. So, why would researchers even look into this in the first place?

COHEN: Well, what the genetic counselors are saying is: "You know what? Maybe we are being unfair to people by saying don't get married just because you are first cousins."

Let's take a look. We have a map of the United States that shows where it is illegal. It is illegal to marry your first cousin in those blue states. And that's 31 states. So, obviously, most states have decided this. The genetic counselors are saying maybe that's really unfair, because some people want to marry

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their first cousins. And why are we telling them not to when maybe there is no good, hard science that says not to?

SNOW: Do we have any idea how many good cousin couples there are in the United States?

COHEN: You know what, Kate? There aren't good statistics. And one of the reasons is that people believe that sometimes first cousins -- or a lot of times first cousins marry and they just don't tell anyone that they're first cousins, so we really don't know.

However, we thought it was very interesting that there is a Web site called cousincouples.com. And so they offer -- here is the Web site right here. And this is a Web site that offers support to first cousins who want to marry. So, there is obviously a grassroots movement here. They also have proposed legislation to make it legal in those 31 states.

And, in some countries, actually 20 percent of the population is married to a first cousin. So, this is probably practiced more than we think.

SNOW: OK, Elizabeth Cohen, interesting stuff. Thanks.

In a moment, your chance to be heard. Do you think Colin Powell's Middle East trip can bring an end to Israeli-Palestinian conflict? And living with terror in Israel: a viewer comment from that country coming up.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

SNOW: Let's go to New York now and get a preview of "LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE," which begins at the top of the hour -- Lou.

LOU DOBBS, "LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE": Kate, thank you.

Coming up: President Bush breaks his silence, today speaking out against the violence in the Middle East. We will be going live to the White House, Jerusalem. And I will be joined by former Defense Secretary William Cohen. And tough talk also coming from the Justice Department, this time in the case against Andersen. We will tell you about new prospects for the possibility of a settlement of a criminal indictment against the firm. And strong nowhere, weak everywhere: That's the assessment of an important military historian who is our guest tonight. And a late-date rally on Wall Street despite a warning from Bristol-Myers Squibb that makes it vulnerable in nearly every aspect.

All that, a lot more coming up at the top of the hour -- please join us -- now back to you, Kate.

SNOW: Thanks, Lou.

Recapping some breaking news from earlier this hour, reaction out of Yasser Arafat's compound in Ramallah: Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian leadership saying -- quote -- they are "committed to the peace process" and are -- quote -- "committed to the statement of President Bush earlier today without conditions." The Palestinian Authority president said that in a statement. The statement was read on the phone earlier in this broadcast by chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat. The statement did not denounce terrorism, something the United States had called on Arafat to do.

Our "Web Question of the Day" asked: "Do you think Secretary Colin Powell's Middle East trip can bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict?" Seventeen percent of you said yes, while the majority, 83 percent, said no. Remember, this poll is not scientific.

Time now to hear from you.

Niv writes to us from Haifa, Israel: "I'm an Israeli teenager. A few days ago, a whole family from my street in Haifa was killed. Until now, I had thought I was safe. Those feelings are gone, and so is the ron family."

In response to our segment on the treatment of priests who are pedophiles, Keith says: "These people do not need treatment. They have committed a felony equivalent to rape or murder. What they need is the death penalty."

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And regarding the story on rudeness in America, Troy writes: "I try to treat everyone with kindness and respect. And guess what? Other people being rude to me is rarely a problem." Kill 'em with kindness.

I'm Kate Snow, in for Wolf Blitzer in Washington. "LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE" begins right now.
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RAHMAN

MODERATOR: DIRECTOR OF THE U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE -- INITIATIVE ON THE MUSLIM
WORLD, RICHARD KAUZLARICH

LOCATION: U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

BODY:

MR. KAUZLARICH: Thank you very much, John (sp), and welcome to all of you.

This morning's current-issues briefing is part of a series of meetings that we've had over the past month exploring one aspect of the conflicts that have been roiling not only the Middle East but Central and South and Southeast Asia. And we began this series with presentations from Landrum Bolling and Ambassador Sam Lewis on giving their impressions of recent trips that they made to Israel and the occupied territories. And this series will continue next Wednesday, April 10th, with the current issues briefing by former Israeli ambassador to the U.S. Zalman Shoval. You can find handouts on the table outside the room regarding the April 10th event.

Certainly, we are in perhaps the most tragic period of the Middle East conflict that I can recall. And when we actually began planning this briefing, there was hope that the adoption of the Abdullah initiative at the Beirut summit and the Arafat offer of a cease-fire might offer some hope of movement out of the downward spiral of suicide bombings directed against innocent civilians in Israel and the Israeli military reprisals, which also resulted in civilian casualties. Sadly, that hope has gone with continuation of the suicide bombings and the subsequent Israeli action in the occupied territories.

Now this morning's session will provide an opportunity to discuss one perspective on how to move events in the Middle East back on course toward negotiations and in time of political settlement. Among the objectives of the institute in pursuing its mandate to work on international-conflict prevention, management and resolution, are to mobilize talent to develop creative policy-relevant assessments of how to manage international conflicts by political means and facilitate dialogue to nurture and shape options for the resolution of conflicts.

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We certainly have in this room this morning, with our speakers and you, the talent to help shape ideas through dialogue. And it's in that spirit that I look forward to your discussion. John (sp) underlined the way that we'd like to proceed with the questions and answers. Let me simply add that we all understand that the current events unfolding in Israel and the occupied territories have generated considerable emotion. And the institute prides itself on being a venue to explore difficult conflicts through an open exchange of different perspectives in a respectful manner. And my experience has been that USIP speakers and audiences share and understand that approach. As moderator of this important discussion, I'll do my best to ensure that we uphold the tradition of the institute, and I know I can count on all of you to share that spirit.

I will not go into the bios of the speakers. Those are out on the table outside the room, too. Let me simply say that Ambassador Farid Abboud, Lebanon's ambassador to the United States, has been here since 1999 and has had a distinguished diplomatic career, with postings in Washington, Moscow, London, Rome and Los Angeles. Hassan Abdel Rahman has headed the Palestinian mission in the United States as its chief representative since 1994 and has served both in Canada, as well as in the United States. And finally, Ambassador Nabil Fahmy, Egypt's ambassador to the United States, too, has been here since 1999, also has had a distinguished career, including as Egypt's ambassador to Japan.

So with that, let me turn it over to you, gentlemen.

Ambassador Fahmy, if you want to begin --B. FAHMY: Thank you. Thank you very much for inviting me here. And I think it's a very important opportunity for Egypt and, I think, also from Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority to share with you some of our views on what's happening in the Middle East.

Let me start by sharing with you my own views, and I'll of course leave the other speakers to make their own points. In looking at the Middle East from Egypt's perspective in what's happening today, we find it today to be an extremely frustrating and perplexing situation.

On the one hand, if you look at what is being said about the endgame of the peace process, it is clearer today than it ever was before -- today it is clearer than it ever was before that when we achieve peace, rather than if we achieve peace -- when we achieve peace, it will be based on a two-state solution, Palestinian and Israeli state, on the basis of the 1967 reality -- in other words, withdrawal from the territories occupied in June '67. It will be based on withdrawal from Syrian territories on the Golan and will be based on security for all states and normal relations for all states, including Israel. It will have to involve a solution of the issue of refugees, and it will have to involve delicate issues, like the issue of Jerusalem, and others, like water and soils.

Whoever you talk to in the political spectrum, whether it is in the Arab side or in the Israeli side, you will find them giving you the same basic structure, although they may have different floors and different details in terms of who gets how much and where.

This has never been the case before. And not only is it the case among the parties to the region; it's also the case today that the U.S. has embraced the two-state solution openly and formally, the Security Council has embraced the two-state solution openly and formally, and the Security Council most recently has actually embraced all the different aspects of the problem. In other words, solving it on the basis of two-state solution, dealing with security issues, dealing with normalization issues, dealing with issues of violence and attacking civilians -- they are all out there on the table as they have never been before, and they're being addressed by everybody as they have never been before.

The Arab summit, which I think I will leave Farid to speak on more -- but the Arab summit itself was another indication of the evolution of the position in the Arab world. On the one hand, for the second time in less than five years, all of the Arab countries -- the first time was in Cairo in '96 -- emphasized again that their strategic objective was peace in the Middle East -- in other words, an Arab-Israeli peace in the Middle East. But this summit was particularly unique in that it enunciated the details, a lot of the details, of what peace should be, and it tried to do that in a manner which was responsive to the other parties

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concerned -- in other words, what the other party wants to listen to -- without, of course, giving in on its
own basic positions.

And that is why in this particular summit, on the basis of an initiative by the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, there was specific reference to normal relations with Israel, because that has been what we have been told for years in the Arab world -- that even if that is what you want to do, you should say it, because that is what will affect the body politic in Israel as things go on.

So what you've seen in this summit is that the Arab world has actually tried to respond to Israel's concerns or Israel's sensitivities in what peace will really mean if it exists. And it was quite legitimate that at the same time not only do they speak to Israel or to the Western world, but they speak to their own community. In other words, it was legitimate and natural for them to restate Arab positions on issues of Arab concerns, like refugees and withdrawal and the other things.

The other important point that I draw from the summit -- and then I'll move to the negative situation in the Middle East -- is that for the first time, except for the cases of countries it had peace with, with Israel -- in other words, Egypt, and then after that, Jordan -- for the first time you have the Arab world speaking to the Israeli people, which has largely been ignored. You have the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia in his speech speaking out to the Israeli people directly. It was not an issue of "I have to deal with Israel because we have a conflict with Israel," it is actually an outreach to the Israeli people. And on that basis, he then referred to the issue of normal relations. And this is also a reflection of how the Arab world has developed not in moving away from its basic positions, but in being responsive to the concerns of the other side of this equation, the other side of the conflict in the Middle East.

Now, that being said, I have to also say that I have never seen the situation in the Middle East which is worse than it is today, and my country has been doing this for quite a long time. It has never been the situation where you see people killed and either -- well, you see people killed and you take it as a matter of fact thing that's happened today; well, if it's two or three killed, that's better than yesterday, which was 10, and the day before, which was 20, and so on and so forth. And it's on both sides. If you go through the Arab world or you go through Israel today, killing is becoming acceptable, and that cannot be the situation that we can accept.

Today, rather than talking to each other as partners looking for peace, we are, because of the most recent events, moving again into talking to each other as adversaries, as enemies. And that word has been used often in the last few days. We have moving again towards resolving issues by force, resolving issues unilaterally. And frankly, that will not work. There is no military solution that Israel can provide for its security. It will not happen. And there is no political security -- excuse me -- there is no political solution for the Palestinians, only through the use of force.

But you have to deal with both concerns. To provide Israel with the security it needs, you have to resolve the core conflict, which is the Palestinian conflict. And to provide the Palestinians with statehood, you have to provide security for the Palestinians and for Israel as well. If you look at the numbers today, people talk quite a bit about the problem of Israeli security. There are many more casualties on the Palestinian side, and if you put that in proportion to the population, believe me, the effect is truly horrendous.

But then again, in spite of where we are today, in spite of the fact that I see people moving away from trying to find a solution, to trying to find retribution and revenge, we cannot allow that to continue. We have to look at how to get out of the situation today. And I think that the only way to do that is, on the one hand, put together a package where you deal with the security dimension -- in other words, Tenet, a cease-fire and Tenet -- within the larger context of a political solution, which is Mitchell-plus. I don't think you can come out with a solution today that simply says, "Achieve a cease-fire, and then we'll talk." And I don't think you can come out with a solution where you color in the details of that ultimate solution and then go back from there and say, "Okay, we will now have a cease-fire."

Without the U.S., we won't get there. Point blank -- no reservations, no qualifications. We pioneered the peace process in Egypt. We did it before you even believed in it, and we will continue to pursue it. But

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this time we will not succeed unless the U.S. completely engages -- and I say this, and I want to give this administration credit for being very clear on the endgame, on what the vision of peace is, and that's something they should be given credit for. And I also agree that they have not been absent from the peace process; they've chosen different ways to pursue it, but they have not been absent from the peace process. But what is required now is not support for the peace process, it is an embracement of the peace process.

We cannot allow this issue to simmer, you cannot allow people to get killed on both sides and wait until the situation is ripe to move in, because frankly, that not only leads to tearing down everything we've built over the last 20 years, it also leads to tearing down the foundations of peace for the future; it affects the interests of all peace-loving nations in the region, including my own; and it affects U.S. interests. You are a global power, the only superpower. You, most of all, are affected by what happens in the rest of the world. We are affected by what happens mostly in our region, and ultimately, in the globalized world, in other regions. But you are affected most of all by what happens. So pursuing peace in the Middle East is not only a moral requirement for the U.S., it's also in the U.S. national interest. Pursuing it now is imperative because if you continue to wait until the two sides get tired or one sides wins -- first of all, one side will not win. But if we continue to wait, what you will do is plant the seeds of more violence on both sides.

And I want to close by making one point. Do not believe for a second that the violence comes from one side or that terrorists are from one side. There are violent elements in all of our societies. And I'll close by simply mentioning that the people who killed Prime Minister Rabin were not Palestinian, they were not Arab, they were Israelis. The people who killed Anwar Sadat were not Israelis, they were people from within our own communities. And these will grow if we don't engage the larger community by providing them hope based on the compromise which was reached over 20 years ago, which is basically to establish peace on the basis of 1967 reality. Waiting, procrastinating will ultimately led to more violence. Starting now may give us an opportunity to resolve it, but we have to do that with a comprehensive approach, not a piecemeal interim approach.

Thank you. (Applause.)B. ABBOD: Thank you, all of you for coming and listening to the analysis regarding a very complicated situation. Before describing the situation as I see it as ambassador from Lebanon, let me describe it shortly as I see it as ambassador in Washington, I mean the perception we have of the way this issue is dealt with here in this city.

There is a great deal of simplification in the way the issue of, quote, unquote, "terrorism" is approached. It is dealt with as if it is simply a law-and-order affair: There are criminals here; we should catch them, we should stop them, et cetera.

While, obviously, violence against civilians for -- deliberate violence against civilians for political purpose, which is the most practical definition of this phenomenon, is a political phenomenon, it is not simply a law-and-order phenomenon, and the solution to it is not a military one or a police one.

The great trap in which Mr. Sharon has led us in is to think that there is a political -- a military solution to this problem, and he's conducting now large-scale operations, supposedly to uproot the problem and to destroy the so-called infrastructure of terrorism. The infrastructures being destroyed is Directorate of Statistics or Ministry of Education or churches or whatever. There is no such thing as an infrastructure for this phenomenon. It's a political problem. It's not a police problem. It should be dealt with as such.

And the most -- it is convenient for some players in the area to play it as simply a police problem, law-and-order problem, the way Mr. Sharon is doing. But I think this city should be very careful before labeling the phenomenon as such and dealing with it as such. There is a political problem, and violence against civilians is part of it. The conflict has been going on for decades. During this conflict there were attacks on civilians nearly at every stage of the conflict. And simply focusing on this type of methods, which is of course rejected by all of us, as the crux of the problem is wrong.

The second aspect of the way this city deals with the problem is moralizing it. We think that addressing the issue of terrorists from a moral viewpoint would really allow us to provide the solutions.

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What I mean is our rejection and our moral outrage regarding these acts should not be used unilaterally, one-sidedly, to disqualify one side while allowing the other side to do whatever it likes. If we are going to reject this type of actions against civilians, it should be balanced, and our outrage should be on both sides. If our moral outrage is used simply to disqualify one side, then it is intellectually dishonest, and it's not very fruitful. We have to be very careful how we use our own rejection or how our own rejection of these actions is used by others.

The third and -- corollary of this point which I need to make is the need to be more balanced in addressing this issue. The number of civilians killed by the Israelis exceed(s) by far the number of civilians killed by the Palestinians. That is a fact, a number.

Saying that the Israelis are killing civilians simply as collateral of ongoing military actions is factually wrong. There are many cases documented by human right(s) organizations -- Amnesty (International) or Human Rights Watch -- or Israeli organization -- B'tselem -- and even the reservist soldiers who have signed documents and made a declaration before refusing to act in the occupied area -- there are many instances in which there were actions of deliberate killings of civilians.

Our rejection should be then very balanced, and we should go beyond it. Once we go beyond it, it becomes very clear that the problem is neither moral nor simply military; it is political, and the solution to it is political.

"Political" means achieving a settlement which is perceived as acceptable by both sides.

The settlement is not simply the codification on a sheet of paper of a balance of power. That is what Mr. Sharon has been proposing all along. What the Arabs have been proposing all along is a settlement which is perceived by both parties as addressing their concerns and their grievances. And the settlement, the framework for this settlement has been proposed by the Arabs in a very articulate way during the last summit in Beirut. It is not new. It is based on the fundamental principles which were accepted by the Arabs and the Israelis and the international community in Madrid: land for peace, withdrawal to 1967 borders in exchange for a modicum of normal relationship between the Arabs and the Israelis, the establishment of a Palestinian state recognized in exchange for recognition of the Israeli state.

The Arabs and the Palestinians have done their part in this. The Palestinians have already recognized the Israelis. Countries in the Arab world have done it. In the last summit, all Arabs have expressed their readiness to do that. It seems that since Madrid there have been a shrinking away from this balanced principal position, and Mr. Sharon has obviously gone a long way to destroy systematically all the process which has been achieved since that. What is going on now in the West Bank and Gaza is not a law and order operation; it is a very elaborate political operation aimed at systematically destroying the principle of peace which were (sic) agreed upon in Madrid, and in Oslo. What Mr. Sharon is telling us is that there will be no balanced settlement of the issue; the settlement will be simply the codification of the balance of power. Since Israel has the most powerful army in the area, the settlement should reflect this reality. This reality would mean that there will be a small state, mini-state, called state, Palestinian state, actually divided in a few Bantustans, and on the other side there will be a normal state living within normal secure borders called Israel. Obviously, this recipe is hardly a recipe for peace, and it is a recipe for continuous warfare.

The Arabs are for the first time united in their approach to the peace process. What has been achieved recently in Beirut is remarkable for its simplicity and the unity. For the first time, all the Arabs, in spite of their immense variety, in spite of the different interests and different nature of the regimes, et cetera, have accepted the proposal, have offered the branch, an olive branch: withdrawal, complete withdrawal and complete peace. The Israelis have responded to that in two ways: either ignoring the whole issue and re-transporting back the issue to the problems of morality, or law and order and security, and by simply focusing on one aspect, one wing of the proposal. Oh yes, normalization is quite nice. Withdrawal, no. We don't -- we don't think so.

The whole crux of the proposal is precisely that it is balanced and that there is a quid pro quo. This cannot be -- I mean, you can't pick and choose in such a proposal. What we are proposing is a package

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 deal. And it can be achieved now by political decision. And the intervention of the U.S. in this respect of
 course is vital. And it is based first on abandoning this idea of law and order issue, of morality, of
 terrorists, et cetera, and moving on to the political process. What is at stake is hard core politics, and not
 posturing about how good or how ugly it is to have somebody blow himself up and killing civilians, and
 innocent civilians. Of course it's ugly. But that doesn't -- this is not what the problem is about.

We are not priests on pulpits to preach how ugly it is or how immoral. This is hard-core politics.
 Politics means the acceptance of a balance which is perceived as addressing the grievances of both sides
 equally. If this can be achieved, it will be with the help of the U.S.. And this is can be done in a short
 term, it's not a long-term dream. The premises for it are there.

Thank you. (Applause.)

MR. RAHMAN: Good morning. I thought a great deal about this morning and how I should make my
 presentation. I cannot not be emotional when I speak because this morning I watched the news and I saw
 footages from Bethlehem, from Ramallah, from Nablus. I saw the footage of Khali Saad (ph) in
 Bethlehem, whose mother and brother were shot yesterday in cold blood -- his mother who is 65 and his
 brother who is 38 -- after blowing up the gate on their home. And he had to spend 24 hours holding the
 hands of his assassinated mother and brother with his three children watching because he was not allowed
 to bury his mother and brother.

I also watched the mass grave in the parking lot of Ramallah hospital where 27 bodies were buried
 because the Israeli army, the army of the only democracy in the Middle East, would not allow people to
 bury their dead.

I watched scores of Palestinians this morning on NBC approaching an Israeli tank -- young kids, age
 5, 6, with their mothers walking half a mile away and confronting an Israeli tank, raising their hands in
 surrender. And I really thought to myself, what does this remind us of? Is it any different from the
 footages we saw during the occupation of Czechoslovakia in the Second World War, and where Jews
 stood in the front of Nazi tanks and had to raise their hands. And what makes me so mad about it that I do
 not see the outrage that we need to see when crimes are committed against civilians in this fashion; when
 you have every single Palestinian town, every single Palestinian man and woman or child unable to get
 out of their homes today because for the last week they have been imprisoned, and for the last 18 months
 living under siege.

And I don't see the outrage that our Jewish-American brothers and sisters supposed to express.
 Because I assure you that Israel, by doing this, does not lay the foundations for peace in our region. On
 the contrary: They are pushing generations of Palestinians and Arabs to become enemies of the State of
 Israel and of the Israeli people. And let's be frank about it, because no one child who sees his father or
 mother humiliated in the way they are humiliated is going to love the Israelis. We don't need articles or
 incitement or television programs to teach our children to dislike Israelis. They see it by their own eyes.
 And no amount of window dressing is going to change this reality, because this boy who stood with his
 grandmother that -- in his side, this he's never going to forget, in the same way that Jews will never forget
 the Holocaust, and we don't expect them to do.

Some in this town say, "Well, the Palestinians deserve it. They brought it onto themselves, because
 they were offered a very generous deal in Camp David, and they rejected it." And this lie has been
 (perpetrated/perpetuated ?) so often in this town to the point where it has become a fact or appears to be a
 fact. I want one Israeli or American delegate -- and I'm in Washington -- who was in Camp David to show
 me what was offered to the Palestinians in Camp David. There was no offer made -- formal offer by Israel
 to the Palestinians in Camp David. There were ideas floated by the Israelis to American delegates that
 varied from one day to the other -- on Jerusalem, on the refugees, on the borders, on water, on the
 settlements, but there was no formal, coherent plan of peace offered to the Palestinians in Camp David.

And what was floated at best was 87 percent of the West Bank. The Israelis will keep 13 percent,
 which are the three settler blocks -- settlement blocks that will dissect the West Bank into three separate
 Bantustans and would leave the two aquifers of water in the North and South of the West Bank under

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 Israeli control and 85 percent of the borders with Jordan also under Israel's control. We said no to this offer.

On the issue of refugees, Israel rejected any legal or moral responsibility for the refugee problem. Eli Rubinstein, who represented Israel in the first meeting with Abu Mazin and Abu -- or Nabil Shaath -- on the commission of refugees, he said, "Israel is not responsible. We have no responsibility to the refugee problem. But Israel will join any international effort to have a fund raised to compensate for resettling Palestinians. But Israel has no responsibility vis-a-vis the refugee problem." No Palestinian can accept that position.

On the issue of Jerusalem, we said we recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Jewish quarter and the Wailing Wall and the area adjacent to that.

That's what you want; we are going to grant that.

In exchange, we demand that Israel withdraws from East Jerusalem, which was occupied in 1967. We offered West Jerusalem to be the capital of Israel, East Jerusalem to be the capital of Palestine, and we can have an open and accessible city to everyone, and let Jerusalem be the symbol of Palestinian-Israeli coexistence. That was also not accepted.

On the question of security, we said to Israel: Listen, we have two precedents before us. We have the Egyptian precedent and the Jordanian precedent. Let's deal with the issues of security in that way. We accept any arrangement for security of Israel, including the positioning of international troops, demilitarized zones, limitations on weapons, any procedure for security except territorial security. We cannot accept that. In other words, we cannot accept the stationing of Israeli armed troops in the West Bank and Gaza, but anything else is acceptable to us. That was not acceptable to Israel.

Israel wanted to control the skies of the West Bank, the airspace; wanted to control the borders. They had no -- so what generous offer did we have that we rejected? In exchange, we offered that Israel will accept the principle of withdrawal from the 1967 boundaries. If there are any adjustment(s) on the boundaries for -- to accommodate Israel, it has to be reciprocal on both sides, because we feel that we have made the historic compromise when we accepted the right of Israel to exist on 78 percent of historic Palestine.

When I was born in 1944, there was no Israel. Yet we were willing to concede -- and we did concede -- 78 percent of what, when I was born, was my country, in exchange for peace.

So by saying this, did we commit a crime? Nevertheless, we continued the negotiations with Israel, even after Camp David. We continued the negotiations in Oslo. We continued the negotiations in Stockholm, in Bolling Air Base, in Andrews Air Base, and in Taba and in Jerusalem.

The Israelis and their supporters in this town are saying that we walked away from Camp David and started the intifada, we walked away from Camp David, notwithstanding that in my presence President Arafat told President Clinton, "Mr. President, we are not ready for a summit. Let's not go to a summit, because the gap is so wide. Allow us private negotiations with the Israelis for a few months, until we narrow the gap. When we narrow the gap, we can come and hold a summit and reach an agreement, because I know, Mr. President, if this summit fails, you are going to blame me." And Clinton, in my presence and Abu Ala and Abu Mazin's presence, said, "I will not blame you, Mr. Chairman."

And every one of you knows what happened after that, that he did not blame Yasser Arafat.

We continued the negotiations. On September the 26th at the hotel Ritz Carlton in Pentagon City, Shlomo Ben-Ami, Gilead Sher, Dennis Ross, Aaron Miller (sp), we are all sitting, we heard about the visit of Sharon to al-Aqsa mosque. We begged them, please Mr. Shlomo, please Mr. Dennis Ross, try, because you are the minister of police, don't let Sharon go to al Haram ash-Sharif, because we understand what does that mean in terms of the way he's going to go, escorted with 1,800 policemen and armed men to observe Jewish sovereignty over al Haram ash-Sharif. That is going to trigger religious feeling. So please, don't let him do it.

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Yasser Arafat that night was dining at the home of Barak, in Quhav Ya'el (ph) in Israel. And he asked him the same question: please, Mr. Prime Minister, don't let Sharon undo what we have achieved so far. Mr. Sharon went there, and he achieved what he set out to achieve, and that is to trigger what has become a very, very lethal and destructive confrontation between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

Today, immediately the next day after, on the -- on September 29th, the Palestinians living at al Haram ash-Sharif demonstrated. Eight of them were killed, the next day 13. There were 49 Palestinians killed in the first week of the intifada before one Israeli was fired at. So who started this confrontation between the Palestinians and the Israelis? Is it the Palestinians? Who for a whole week did not fire one shot at the Israelis, while 49 of them were killed by the Israeli army? So that's history today. I am saying this in order to set the record straight on this issue that has been distorted in this time.

Today, what is the objective of Mr. Sharon? I believe that Mr. Sharon has a two-fold objective. One is to dismantle the Oslo process and, consequently, the Palestinian National Authority. And the second objective, which is -- which goes parallel to it, and that is to defeat the Palestinian people militarily -- in other words, break their will -- so they will accept his plan for, as he calls it, long- term arrangements. In other words, that the 35 years of occupation will be extended probably 35 years more of illegal Israeli military occupation. I am going to take this opportunity here today to tell Mr. Sharon that he is absolutely wrong. No Palestinian is going to be with Mr. Sharon on those bases.

There is only one way to solve this problem, because if Mr. Sharon succeeds in his objective of destroying the Palestinian Authority and trying to break the will of the Palestinian people, he is opening the gates of hell wide open in our region. And we are going to go back, not to what happened after '67, but what happened after 1948: in other words, radicalize the whole region.

And what's going on today in the streets of Cairo, Amman, Beirut, Sana'a is an indication of what is going to happen in the future.

I see acquiescence to Mr. Sharon, acquiescence; because if Mr. Sharon is able to tell General Zinni that you cannot visit Yasser Arafat and Washington cannot say much about it; and if Mr. Sharon can prevent Solana -- Javier Solana, the envoy of the European Union from visiting Arafat and Europe cannot do much about it, then Mr. Sharon is the leader of the only superpower in the world because he can defy Washington and he can defy Europe; he can humiliate the Palestinians; he can defy the Arab world. He does not give a damn about anybody else, and he can get away with it.

If this is the case, then again, we are in big, big trouble. Everyone -- Israelis as well as Palestinians. Yes, Israel has the military capability to impose curfews on the Palestinians, but Israel cannot direct the will of the Palestinian people. Israel cannot break the will of the Palestinian people because no colonial power in history was able to defeat people. Colonial powers inflict casualties on peoples, they defeat armies, but they do not defeat peoples because we are defending our God-given right to live as a free people in our own country -- free from Israel's occupation, free from Jewish (Taliban ?) settlers in Palestinian territories, free of the most extreme elements of the Jewish societies around the world who are coming from Kiev, Moscow and -- (inaudible) -- New York to settle in the heartland of the West Bank and Gaza.

We have the God-given right to live as a free people, and we are not going to give up on that, regardless whether Mr. Sharon is going to employ 1,000 tanks and 100,000 soldiers, and whether he is going to allow us to bury our dead today or he is not, we are going to survive because Mr. Sharon is the intruder and we are the owners of the land.

We offered Israel a compromise with the hope that they will behave as neighbors with us, that they will respect our humanity and our dignity, not to perpetually control us and deprive us of every right that every one of you take for granted.

In this 21st century, colonialism and denial of rights of people to self-determination is not acceptable. It should not be acceptable. No one should tolerate it.

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Listen, maybe what I'm saying is -- does not sound good academically or politically. But let me tell you, that is the heartfelt position of every single Palestinian today.

And if Israel wants to live in peace with the Palestinian people, they are welcome, and there is a formula to achieve that. And that's what Ambassador Abboud spoke about, and that is the Arab League initiative which calls on Israel to withdraw from the 1967 boundaries and have peace and normal relations with the Arab world.

But if Mr. Sharon wants to keep his Jewish settlers in the Palestinian territories, and he wants to castrate the Palestinian people, that's not a formula for peace. It is not going to work. Even if I accept it -- and other people -- future generations of Palestinians are going to reject it.

There is a great deal of responsibility on the shoulders of Washington, not because only it is a superpower. No, because Israel is protected by Washington, and when the United States paralyzes the work of the only international organization that is in charge of peace and security, namely the Security Council of the United Nations, then Washington has the responsibility to achieve that objective. Otherwise, no one is going to accept any claims from Washington that they are for peace or for equality or for progress, because peace cannot be for one people at the expense of the other people. Justice cannot be for one at the expense of others.

You know, peace is the respect of the rights of others. It is just as simple as that. And if the rights of the Palestinian people are not going to be respected, I am afraid to tell you that there is not going to be peace in our region.

We are at a very critical juncture today. Either Sharon succeeds or peace will succeed, because Sharon today is not only bulldozing the streets of the West Bank, but he is dismantling the edifice and the foundation over which peace can be established in our region.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MR. KAUZLARICH: Before we begin the questions, I would just note that over the last few days there have been a series of editorials and op-ed pieces that I think have encapsulated both the tragedy and the sense of finding a way to end the violence. And I would hope that as we go through the questions and answers here, we can focus on the steps that all of us need to play to make that possible. So with that, if individuals would like to ask questions, if they could step up to the microphone again, please identify both you and your affiliation.

Q I'm Carla Crossway (sp) with CNN.

All of you have expressed that U.S. involvement is essential.

MR. KAUZLARICH: (Off mike) -- microphone?

Q Can you hear me? Hello? Well, it's not on.

All of you have expressed interests or a concern that the U.S. must be involved in the peace process. At this hour, President Bush is announcing that Secretary of State Powell is headed to the Middle East. Your reaction to that -- and what does he need to do to succeed on this trip?

MR. RAHMAN: Well, we welcome, of course, if the news are accurate and Secretary Powell is going to the region. The first order should be the implementation of resolution 1402, which the United states voted for, and that's cease-fire and withdrawal of the Israeli army and the lifting of the siege from the Palestinian territories, including Yasser Arafat, and back to the negotiating table. B. ABBOD: I think the U.S. would be far more effective if it is perceived by people in governments of the region as more balanced. The United States of America is now the only country on this planet who has not condemned or criticized Mr. Sharon's practices. It's as if you're saying the only people who are wise and reasonable are this side of the Atlantic, and everybody else on the planet is wrong. That does not make a lot of sense for the people of the region.

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There should be an approach which is more balanced. There are innocent civilians killed on both sides. There should be a very forceful criticism and condemnation of what Mr. Sharon is doing -- at least as equal as the criticism and condemnation of the acts which lead to innocent civilian casualties on the Israeli side. I think if the perception in the area is that the United States is ready for a balanced role, the United States' role will be extremely effective very quickly.B. FAHMY: If the news is accurate, we would welcome that. I think it's very important for this government to be there at that level. That being said, it's also important what the message is that he's carrying. And my position is very close, and I think almost identical to what Ambassador Rahman said. But let me add to it: I do believe the content of resolution 1402 of the Security Council, which was endorsed by the U.S., packaged with the resolution adopted just a few weeks before that, that related to the Saudi peace initiative -- the content of the two resolutions, both supported by the U.S., have all the elements that are required to move the sponsors forward from the immediate crisis to the larger context of a resolution of the conflict itself.

Q Hello. My name is Mark O'Keefe (sp). I'm a correspondent for Newhouse News Service here in Washington. And I have a question for Mr. Rahman, but I welcome others to join in.

The spiritual concept of martyrdom appears to have become a driving force for some of the violence in the Middle East right now. A couple of quick examples: Mr. Arafat himself saying repeatedly to the Arab world that he's prepared, if not eager, to be a martyr; some of the Arab nations compensating families of people who willingly became martyrs.

And my question is, that for a predominantly Christian United States and people who are reading about this motivation, I think perhaps they're misunderstanding what this means, what this word means, what "martyrdom" means. And could you attempt to explain what this concept means and why it appears to become a rallying cry in the Middle East right now?

MR. RAHMAN: Let me say this. First of all, nothing in our religion or culture asks you to be a martyr for the sake of being a martyr. No one wants to become a martyr just for the sake of being a martyr. You are a martyr only if you die in the defense of your country, in the defense of your family, or in the defense of your property.

For the average Palestinian, for every single Palestinian and Arab there is an illegal Israeli occupation that violates your right to life, your right to property, and your right to your country. And it has taken away -- so to say that I want to fight and die for my country, I think this is the battle cry of -- I have here a quote from Patrick Henry, "Give me liberty or give me death." Here is it. I brought it with me. So if any of you forget it, I will read it to you. (Laughter.) That was the battle cry. So why is it good for Patrick Henry and it is not good for Yasser Arafat?

Tell the American public that I said this, please. (Laughter.)

Q Sir, If I'm hearing you right, are you saying that this is primarily a political motivation --

MR. RAHMAN: Oh, absolutely.

Q -- rather than a spiritual motivation?

MR. RAHMAN: Oh, absolutely.

Q Okay.

MR. RAHMAN: It is really give me liberty or give me death. We say, "Give me liberty or give me martyrdom." It's the same. Death -- not wasteful death, it is death that is intended in the defense of your family, if your property, of your freedom.B. ABBOD: Let me just add a few words of comment. There is some sort of morbid fascination in this country with this issue of people killing themselves for a political cause. While this has altered history, I mean there have been cases like that in all conflicts, and even when you go in a "mission impossible" -- when you went during World War II on a "mission impossible", with 1 percent chance of returning alive from it, and this has happened, that is called in this country "heroism" and not really suicide or whatever.

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But it's irrelevant. I mean, if we're going to focus on this psychological or moral issue, we are fudging the issue. The issue is political. There is an occupied people and there are occupiers.

Some of the occupiers have very sophisticated weapon, and they are killing civilians; some of the occupied have other types of weapons, which include self-immolation. I know this is morbidly fascinating for Western eyes -- for Western public opinion. But let us not fall into the trap of focusing on this approach while forgetting the essential. The essential is occupation and occupied, and it's a political conflict.

MR. FAHMY: I think they have explained it quite well. There's no point elaborating on what they've said.

Q Thank you.

Q I am Yoichi Nishido (sp) of the Sankei Shimbun Japanese daily newspaper. How surprised were you when you noticed that President Bush's approach to the Palestinian issue was totally different from his father's? Thank you. (Light laughter.)

MR. FAHMY: Well, I'll start on that one. (Laughter.)

MR. : You'd better.

MR. FAHMY: Frankly, we never related his positions to his father's, or his father's positions to his. The president was elected by the American people. He is mandated by them, and he's held accountable by them. He is held accountable -- don't get me into that. He's accountable before the world community because of the status that America has in the world community. That's the only criteria we apply, and all we've been asking for is a resolution of this conflict with the help of the U.S. that provides equal justice for everybody, Arabs and Israelis, and particularly the Palestinians who are under oppression.

MR. ABBOD: I don't have any comment on this.

Q My name is Mubarak Awad (sp). And my question is, if the Arab League got no to all their requests to have peace with Israel, or not to return to the '67 border for peace and normal relationship, does Arab have anything else, a different strategy or not? That's one question.

The second question, Egypt is trying to pressure Israel at this time not to communicate with them on a political thing. Could you please explain that?

MR. FAHMY: Okay, let me try to deal with both, and Farid, you might want to deal with the Arab League one.

But in terms of the Arab League, the Arab League's position has been that peace is a strategic objective. They have said this years ago, and they have said it again in clear terms today. If I can refer to my own country, we were pioneers in the peace process, and we faced many, many obstacles. But we have not moved away from that strategic objective. We may move tactically from one point to the other, depending on what the reaction is, what the cooperation or the lack of it is from the other side. But we will continue to pursue peace. That is what we think satisfies the national interest of the Arab world. If I may say, I think it all satisfies the interest of Israel and that of the world community as a whole. But we need a partner in the peace process. It cannot simply be calls for peace on one side and oppression and violence and military on the other.

In terms of what Egypt has done per se, if you look at our peace treaty with Israel and you read it carefully, not, as is often the case, skipping one paragraph and reading the other, it starts off by stating that this is part of a larger effort to achieve peace between the Arab world and Israel. We never embarked on this as a simple step forward where we could stop, because we knew ultimately we would fall on our faces if that was the objective.

But our peace agreement with Israel has sustained tremendous pressure, tremendous problems, and I won't get into the details.

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That does not mean that we condone or we will accept everything that Israel does. And there are points in time where disagreements are dealt with diplomatically, through diplomatic channels. There are points in time where disagreements or actions are so abhorrent that you have to take action to respond to them.

Now what we have done in the past by withdrawing our ambassador -- not abrogating relations, by withdrawing our ambassador in the past, and what we have done recently by saying that we will continue to pursue peace -- as we said yesterday, we will continue to pursue peace and the resolution of the Palestinian cause with Israel, that we will continue to have relations with them. But we cannot ignore the fact that what they have done recently is completely unacceptable for anybody, for any country, and we are angry about that. Therefore, we will not be able to develop relations in a positive sense in this environment, and we cannot stand silent in this environment. We have not cut relations completely with Israel; we have kept diplomatic relations, in the objective of ultimately achieving peace with them. But they have to understand they are accountable, like everybody else.B. ABBOD: The fact that the Israeli onslaught nearly coincided time-wise with what was proposed on the Arab side is actually very revealing. The road -- the Middle East is at a crossroad. What is being offered are two options: either one of a political settlement, which is perceived as acceptable by all parties, along the lines which were proposed by the Arabs, or a dynamic of confrontation, which can be protracted and which can have tremendous consequences on the internal stability of the governments of the country, on the situation -- the whole regional situation, and on U.S. interests in the country. These are the two options.

The Arabs are not really threatening. It is -- because actually the person who has -- who holds the card, who will decide which option the region will follow, is actually Mr. Sharon. Either the option of peace, which has been offered, will be accepted, or the dynamic of confrontation, which has been chosen, obviously, by Mr. Sharon, will be perpetuated, will continue, and then the whole region will be the witness of very grave deterioration of the situation. This has been mentioned by Ambassador Abdel Rahman.

But the public opinion in the area is extremely angry, and it seems now that the main job, the main task of the governments, especially those friendly to the United States, is simply to contain it. How long can they do that? In what fashion? There are limits to this process. If Mr. Sharon pushes too hard along this -- along dynamic of confrontation, it will probably have an effect, and the whole balance of power in this -- in the area will be changing.

Q My name is Wei Jing (sp) from Phoenix TV of Hong Kong. I have one question for Ambassador Fahmy. Before and after you -- degrading ties with the Israelis, did Egypt seek or receive any consultation from the U.S.?

And the second question is for all. If you say the administration's way of dealing it (sic) is somewhat slow and biased, do you think that's because they're unable or they're unwilling to do more?B. FAHMY: On the first question, in as far as I am aware, I don't know of a specific meeting where this subject -- in other words, our reaction yesterday -- was discussed before it was decided.

That being said, we have consultations with the U.S. government, since this last cycle of crisis, almost on an hour-to-hour basis, and that has included in the middle of the night. So I can't tell you that it was not mentioned in any of the discussions, but it was not a subject of a specific meeting per se. And every analyst around the world who follows the Middle East and sees what's happening in the public and sees what's happening in the territories could easily draw the conclusion that there would have to be a reaction from different Arab countries. So I don't think it was a surprise, but I'm not aware that we had a specific meeting to discuss that before the decision was taken. It, nevertheless, frankly, this decision was taken quite carefully and quite resolutely, and it would not have made a difference.

Regarding the U.S. position, again, I mean, all we want the U.S. to do is to completely fulfill the commitment it took upon itself as the sponsor of the Madrid peace process, and the responsibility it carries in the Security Council; we just want peace in the Middle East. We don't want it to be anti-Israel,

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 pro-Arab; we're simply looking for a resolution on the basis that we've all agreed upon, including Israel,
 the Arab world and the U.S.

Thank you.

Q Good morning. Mr. Rahman, good to see you. My name is Jim Vitirello (sp). I'm with the Middle East Peace Committee of Episcopal Diocese of Washington, and as you know, we've been working on this issue for many years.

What I was -- first of all, I was very happy to hear your explanation of Camp David, and I want to talk about that because of profound implications that it still has today on both the American public opinion and on Israeli public opinion, particularly also Jewish public opinion in this country where I hear time and time again to my Jewish brothers and sisters, who I work with a lot, you know, "Look, Arafat walked away from a generous offer; it shows that he really doesn't want peace. It shows the Palestinians really didn't want peace."

My question to you is, particularly after what you've told us today, and I've read this before, is why in God's name -- excuse me for saying that, but I really mean that -- why didn't you or somebody from the Palestinian Authority say it then? Why didn't you explain your position at that time when you knew what happened, particularly after Clinton and Barak basically betrayed you, why didn't you say it? It took months for the Palestinians to explain, to say -- I begged the Palestinians to explain. I couldn't get it.

MR. RAHMAN: I'm going to tell you a story why we did not do it. At the conclusion of Camp David, President Arafat met with President Clinton and urged him to consider this summit as part of a process, that we will continue the discussions. And President Clinton also promised him yes, there will be other efforts by Clinton.

I met, and then I accompanied Arafat to Andrews Air Base. There were so many members of the press. At that time, Barak was holding a press conference blaming Arafat for rejecting what was offered in Camp David. In fact, he was really lying, in other words.

I told Arafat, I told him, "Mr. Barak and President Clinton are blaming you. Why didn't you address the media and explain your position?" And he told me, "Listen, I am not interested in dispute with President Clinton. We are going to work together in the future." He needs it, because his wife was running for election in New York, and Barak -- and his vice president was running for the president of the United States. So Yasser Arafat really did not -- I mean, I'll say it very honestly and frankly, did not understand what was the agenda neither of Barak nor of Clinton. He thought that this was part of their propaganda and they needed it, and that we will come back and restart negotiations.

But nevertheless, he left behind Saeb Erekat, who went on "Nightline" that same night and said that we have achieved 80 percent of the negotiations, and there's 20 percent left, and let's continue the negotiations. That was the position that was made by Saeb Erekat that same night.

So listen, Yasser Arafat might have been very naive, and all of us too, in thinking that really the intentions of Mr. Barak, and even President Clinton, who I hope I am wrong, was very innocent. It is a mistake in terms of -- but that does not justify the lies that have been made by many officials in the Clinton administration and by many supporters of Israel in this town who took this and made it a pretext for brutalizing the Palestinians in the way they are doing now.

MR. KAUZLARICH: Thank you very much.

Q John Salsberg (sp). I'm here in my personal capacity. We all know that much of the arms that are being used now in the occupied territories by the Israeli forces are supplied by the United States. We also know that there are congressional laws which restrict the use of U.S. arms, except in legitimate self-defense. And it could be seriously questioned whether these arms are being used contrary to U.S. law as well as international law. We also know that President Bush has given the green light to the use of these arms by the prime minister's forces.

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To what extent is the United States as a, quote, unquote, "honest broker", been seriously jeopardized by these actions? And would it not be helpful for the European Union to have a more active role in the peace process?

Another separate question to Mr. Rahman. Let's suppose that just peace is obtained along the lines the Palestinian Authority can accept. Are you confident that all or most Palestinians will accept that, will accept Israel pre-'67 borders, or will those still be a problem of violence, and how would the Palestinian Authority deal with that?

Thank you?

MR. RAHMAN: Well, on the issue of the use of American weapons against Palestinians, not only you and I know, but thanks to the satellite dishes, everyone in the world knows. And every man and woman in the Arab world knows that the Apache helicopters and the F- 16s and the tanks that are being used are American-made weapons, and this is not a secret. I mean -- and I think -- I want to be a little bit cynical; I think the Israelis makes it a point to use American weapons against the Palestinians, because they have their own-made weapons that they usually don't exhibit so much when they attack Palestinian parties. But that's an American-Israeli issue.

So the Arab world is very, very upset. And after September 11, after the tragic and the horrible events of September 11, which we all condemn, there was the question, why they don't like us, why they hate us. And I'll tell you why. It's not because there is anything inherently antagonistic about the United States. On the contrary; if people go back to 1956, when Eisenhower ordered Israel, Britain and France to withdraw from the Canal Suez, there were demonstrations in all of the Arab world raising the pictures of Eisenhower and applauding for the United States.

And so the United States is closer to the Arab culture, to the Arab civilization than anybody else. So we have nothing (antagonant ?). We are upset with the United States because of its unjust support to Israeli policies against the Palestinians and the Arab world. That's what angers the Arab world. So the U.S. of American weapons is really a very, very serious for the Arab people.

Now, on the question of just peace, I'm going to give you just an example. When we came in 1994 to the West Bank and Gaza as the Palestinian Authority, the support for the forces that opposed the peace process was about 29 percent, according to all polls. By 1999, it came down to 8 percent. In other words, when we had a peace process, the support for the forces that oppose the peace process went down. Today, I think it goes very, very high. Why? Because Palestinians see that the only way the Israelis are dealing with the Palestinians is through military means.

And today, as I was coming, in the morning, I heard this program on National Public Radio -- 34 new Jewish settlements built in the West Bank only after Sharon has become the prime minister. You know what 34 settlements mean? For many people think settlements are villages installed, built in the Palestinian territories. That's not it, because every Jewish settlement has a permit around it, soldiers protecting it; the settlers themselves are armed by the Israelis. Those settlements are connected by highways and roads to Tel Aviv and therefore, it is dissecting the West Bank. And for you, if you are living across the street from a Jewish settlement, like my village is, and I want to go to the other side of the street, I cannot cross because that road is controlled by Israel, and any settler or any Israeli soldier can hold me there for six or 10 hours without allowing me to cross to the other side of the street. So the humiliation and the brutalization of the Palestinians is turning Palestinians very, very angry.

Once this is removed from our relations with the Israelis, I assure you -- listen, we built a great deal of people-to-people relationships in the last -- in the seven years of peace between us and Israel. There were friendships, there were business ventures, there were -- many things emerged. But the Palestinians found that Israel maintained its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Why did we need 200 military checkpoints in the West Bank, why, if we are at peace with Israel or making peace with Israel? Why Mr. Barak will allow the transfer of 50,000 Jewish settlers in one year and a half to the West Bank, while we were negotiating a final status agreement? Why he did not implement any of the agreements that we

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signed at Wye River, including the third redeployment? Why he did not turn over to the Palestinians the
control over Al Azzariye, Anata, and Abu Dis, which the Israeli Knesset approved?

So the Israelis now, and their supporters in this town are saying one, the Palestinians reneged. Who reneged, on what? But of course the propaganda that is trying to dehumanize the Palestinians, turn them into monsters -- I heard Mr. Pinkus saying the Palestinians do not have respect for human life. Imagine! That's exactly what anti- Semites used to say about Jews in Europe. That we, as a people, do not have respect for human life? Whereas, anyone who would say that Jews do not have respect for human life will be labeled as a racist, as an anti-Semite, here it is used every day against the Palestinians with impunity, and I don't see anyone, even in the media, protest it.

MR. KAUZLARICH: I have a question here that's come over the e- mail that I'd like to raise, and it has to do with, in fact, the Palestinian suicide bombing. And the question is whether Arafat is peripheral to or integral to the continued attacks, and what -- you know, what is the U.S. and Israeli demands for their stopping -- what impact will that have?

MR. RAHMAN: First of all, Yasser Arafat had opposed any attack on any Israeli civilians, whether it is suicide bombing or any other form of attacks against civilians. And in his speech to the Arab Summit -- if anyone cares to read it in Arabic -- by the way, it is not in English, in the language that everyone understands -- he called on the Palestinians in that speech not to hurt Israeli civilians, and he called on Israel to avoid the Palestinian civilians. So Yasser Arafat has spoken not only to the Palestinians in closed circuit, he spoke through Al-Jazeera network, which is viewed by every single Arab family that owns a satellite dish.

So there are lies perpetrated here by that "Yasser Arafat supports." Yasser Arafat does not support. And what does -- what interest Yasser Arafat has to have suicide bombers? In fact, in the compound of the preventive security, there were prisoners from Hamas, Jihad -- (word inaudible) -- and other parties when the Israelis attacked the preventive security in the West Bank. Yasser Arafat took action. We had at some point 600 prisoners. We violated the human and the political rights of the Palestinians for the sake of having security for Israel. But --

MR. KAUZLARICH: But the question was, is he integral to or peripheral to affecting these attacks?

MR. RAHMAN: Well, these attacks -- you know, there are two conditions in order to -- Yasser Arafat has two ways of preventing this. One is persuasion, to persuade his public; and second is to punish who are responsible. In order to persuade, the political climate created by Israel is not conducive to persuasion. The Palestinian public are very angry. You have 60 percent of the Palestinians unemployed, you have 1,500 Palestinians killed, you have Palestinian orchards, Palestinian trees uprooted, 600 homes of the Palestinians demolished; Palestinians under a state of siege. Yasser Arafat needs a modification, needs a relaxation of the situation to tell the Palestinian public, "Listen, I am getting you something."

The second, his punishment -- his ability to punish, you know, systemically, Mr. Sharon has destroyed every single building and vehicle that belongs to the Palestinian Security Force. He has targeted the Palestinian police. How can you expect a Palestinian police, who is sleeping in the street because he has no building, who has to walk on his feet, who is himself targeted by the Israeli helicopters to be killed, to protect Israel? That's nonsense!

MR. KAUZLARICH: Okay. We have a few more questions. And if we can keep the questions and answers short, we will make our 12:00 deadline.

Please?

Q Thank you, Sir. My name is Mohammed Sayed (sp). I work for Al Ahram newspaper in Egypt. And my question is addressed to Ambassador Nabil Fahmy. Ambassador Nabil seemed to be arguing that the American role is indispensable. But I think this argument is far from adequate. He's got to really argue the case that this role is possible as well.

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And in terms of possibility, it's either logical or historical. What evidence do you have to persuade me that this country has had the long traditions of successful peacemaking around the world? And what evidence do you have to persuade me that this role has been really instrumental or has been proven in the Middle East, especially with the fact that Palestinians have been waiting for justice since 1948, at least?

Thank you. B. FAHMY: Well, the short answer to the question is, just look at the Egyptian-Israeli peace agreement that was agreed to at Camp David in negotiations President Carter with very substantial texts put forward by the American administration, itself. Both Secretary Vance -- late Secretary Vance and National Security Adviser Brzezinski were fundamental in doing that. So I think the U.S. does have a success story in the past, when it's felt a need and a desire to do that. I see Ambassador Cisco (sp) in the audience, and frankly, if you look back at the days after the '73 war, with the disengagement process, where it all started, they were instrumental in doing that.

So can they be instrumental? Of course they can be instrumental. Do we need them? Yes, we need them. We need them more, rather than less. But the onus for the present cycle of violence and the problems we're facing is -- excuse me -- the problems we're facing today are because of the cycle of violence, are because of occupation.

Thank you.

Q Hello, I'm Lindsay Miller with Seeds of Peace.

And as you all know, what the concern of my organization is in the hearts and minds of the next generation, which is going to be growing up and take over the leadership in the region. To what extent do you think that this horrible escalation of violence is a reflection of both the Israeli and Palestinian societies -- the fear generated in the lives of Israelis from suicide bombers, to the point that they can't even go outside; the Palestinians, from the escalation that has been perpetrated on them? Or to what extent do you think it may be intractable because it could be due to these two leaders who cannot take a leadership position and have a lifelong animosity towards each other and just will not be able to go beyond perhaps a cease-fire? B. ABBOD: I don't think the role of personalities is really an essential part of the problem. I mean, the conflict between the Arabs and the Israelis have transcended for the change of leadership and the Arabs and -- the Palestinians and the Israelis could not reach an agreement with Barak, with Netanyahu, et cetera, I mean, and -- so I don't think that is really an issue. What is at issue are policies and political problems -- mainly the occupation. And we should not personalize the problem or narrow them to a personal animosity between Mr. Sharon and Arafat and others.

The fact that the Israelis are feeling now more insecure is not new. I mean, the whole approach of Israeli security philosophy is wrong. It seems that for years, Israeli politicians have told their people that occupation is a good tool to provide security, while actually, occupation has always been the source of insecurity. It has never been an instrument of security. Occupation as a instrument of security has failed tremendously in the Middle East at every stage. And there is no proof, not one shred of evidence that what the Israeli politician have been telling their people for decades, that they need to occupy this place, whether Lebanon or the Golan or the West Bank or Sinai, is true. Occupation breeds insecurity and no, it does not promote security.

So the problems are really basic, fundamental issues. And if you -- an approach to security and to living together with another people. Living with the other -- with a neighbor -- as equals would be the solution to security. I think peace will be arriving in the Middle East when the prime minister of Israel will be able to say in the Knesset that all men are created equal, whether they are Jews or Gentiles and that they are -- they have exactly the same rights.

MR. RAHMAN: Lindsay, you know that I send my three children to Seeds of Peace camps. And so I'm a believer in what you've done, and I brought my nephews also to attend the camp and -- but I also want to remind you that in the discussions that took place and the sessions and the seminars that you had, the issues that were raised between Palestinians and Israeli children are the same issues that I'm raising here.

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It is the humiliation, it is the deprivation, it is the subjugation of our lives to the Israelis; it is the control by Israel of our lives.

We watch the same movies, we watch the same channel of television, we read probably not the same books, because some books are not allowed into the West Bank. So we have the same values. Why a young Palestinian who is the age of 15 with an Israeli, the Israeli kid is living in a free society, and this Palestinian kid is living in a society that is controlled by the Israeli army.

We -- I mean, what really puzzles me, that in the year 2002, military colonization is tolerated, and not only tolerated, but it is not mentioned. I did not hear you, Lindsey (sp), saying something about it when you asked the question. And you are asking me the question in the same way you formulated the question indicates that you have not even thought about it, because occupation is occupation. Occupation is a violation of human dignity and that's a constant act of terror directed against people individually and collectively.

And so when we say that -- at the United Nations that people have the right to defend themselves when they are invaded, I assume that if the United States is tomorrow invaded by a foreign army, all of you, including myself, will rise to defend the United States, and this would be something very natural. Why, when the Palestinians protect against Israel's occupation they are called terrorists, and not only those who are involved in acts of terror, but every single Palestinian becomes a terrorist?

That is a problem that we have to deal with. And unless this course is changed, it's going to be perpetrated. And it has to be changed by the American-Jewish community first of all, before anybody else. You have to stand up and speak against it because believe me, there is much more debate about Israeli policies in the Israeli Knesset than in the U.S. Congress, and there is much more debate in the Israeli press than in the American press about Israeli policies. And there is much more opposition to Sharon in Tel Aviv than in New York and Washington. Why is it? Why Avraham Burg can stand up in the Israeli Knesset and say that Sharon is committing crimes in the West Bank and Gaza, and I don't see Mr. DeLay in the Congress of the United States, or any member of U.S. Congress standing up and saying something about it?

MR. KAUZLARICH: We have got to get two questions, otherwise, all of you are going to have to help us move chairs. (Laughter.) So that's the threat if --

MR. RAHMAN: We will move anyway. I'm ready, you see, I don't like occupation. (Laughter.)

MR. KAUZLARICH: Two more questions. And thank you for understanding our problem.

Q My name is Judy Barsalou. I'm on the staff of the U.S. Institute of Peace, and my question is for Ambassador Abboud.

Yesterday Syria carried out a second redeployment of troops from Lebanon in relation to the Taif agreement. My question is first of all, is the timing of this long-delayed redeployment significant at any -- in any respect to the -- to what's going on to the south? Second, is the redeployment of these troops -- I'd also like to know how many Syrian troops remain in Lebanon, if you have that figure. And is the redeployment in the Bekaa valley of any military significance, again in relation to a fear of an invasion from the south by Israel? I've also seen quite a bit of discussion in the Lebanese press recently about -- suggesting that the Lebanese government is having discussions with Hezbollah about the role that it plays in this conflict. Can you tell us more about that and whether or not you think the government will take any serious steps to prevent Hezbollah from acting?

MR. ABOUD: With regard to the first question, the redeployment of the Syrian troops was decided a long time ago. It was agreed upon by -- during meetings between the leadership. And the two leaders in the two countries were simply waiting for the controversy about the situation of the Syrian troops in Lebanon to subside a little bit, and then it was carried out. It doesn't have any military significance as far as the Arab-Israeli conflict because the troops, the Syrian troops in Lebanon are basically security and, you know, support of the government, and they're not really combat troops against Israel or something, and especially those who were withdrawn from out (?) Lebanon to the Bekaa. So I don't think you should

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exaggerate the significance as far as military issues are concerned. It is simply a reflection of the fact that the situation in Lebanon is being stabilized incrementally, and that the need for outside forces is diminishing incrementally, and that the main focus in the problems of Lebanon is now on the economy, which is, indeed, very troubled also, and not on political controversies.

With regards to the Hezbollah actions, there are discussions between -- there is always a discussion -- Hezbollah is part of the polity in Lebanon. It's not an outside group. These are the natives of the land. And sometimes I am asked a question about Hezbollah as if they are, you know -- fall in Lebanon with the last monsoon rain. I mean, these are natives of the land. They are -- they have -- they are a large party in Lebanon, and they are members of the parliament. There are continuous contacts between them and the rest of the polity in Lebanon. And I would leave it here. I am not privy to discuss the detail of the discussion about that.

Q Tom Ackerman (sp), I'm a reporter with Beale (sp) broadcasting. President Bush a few minutes ago in a speech not only said that he was sending Powell to the Middle East, but he also called for full implementation of Resolution 1402. One thing he said was that while Arafat has failed his people, he also called for the Israeli settlements to stop and for the occupation to end. What comments do you have on that, Mr. Rahman?

MR. RAHMAN: We welcome President Bush's statement. We think it's a very positive and constructive statement. We hope that we would pursue the efforts to implement that.

Q How would you like to see that pursued?

MR. RAHMAN: Well, through the efforts of -- diplomatic efforts. I believe that the implementation of the resolution should be prompt, should be immediate, because this will save us more -- any bloodshed. And again, this has to be linked to a political process, and the -- we can take up from where we left in Taba and continue the negotiations in accordance with the vision that the United States put forward and the Saudi plan. And in this case, I believe that we need a third party assistance. In other words, we need international monitors, international observers, international peacekeeping force to separate us from the Israelis.

Q And how do you respond to his comment that President Arafat has failed his people because he has failed to follow through --

MR. RAHMAN: Ah, I think that's left for the Palestinians to decide. That's a Palestinian issue.

MR. KAUZLARICH: Anything else?

I'm going to break my own rule because we had one additional question via e-mail which I really think deserves some thought. And basically, it is that in the last century the world has seen at least two examples of nonviolent resistance that have resulted in eventual success, and these examples being in India and in the American South, where African-Americans have thrown off legalized segregation and discrimination.

The question is, after 50 years of struggle, the Palestinians have not achieved their objectives using violence. The question is, why not try nonviolence?

MR. RAHMAN: Well, you know, the first intifada was a nonviolent intifada, and I don't believe -- I believe there were 2,000 Palestinians killed by the Israelis. The man who was here, Mubarak Awad, organized an institute for nonviolence in Jerusalem in the early -- in the mid-80s, in fact, for nonviolence, and he led a movement of nonviolence. He and his colleagues were expelled by force from Jerusalem to the United States. So yes, you can ask him. He is here.

He is -- and he was never allowed to return, by the way, although he is born in Jerusalem, his father was born in Jerusalem, his grandfather was born in Jerusalem. He is one of the most traditional families in Jerusalem. But he was taken from his home to the airport, put on an airplane, and exported to the United States.

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So we tried that, and -- but the amount of violence by the Israelis on -- and the level of violence and the number of killings -- I mean, people forget there are 1,500 Palestinians killed in the last 17 months alone. There are 47,000 wounded Palestinians, in one way or the other.

So there is -- you cannot control the emotions of people in those situations. If there was a reaction -- there's a difference between what happened in the South of the United States and India under Gandhi. Here you have Jewish settlers, armed to the teeth, who are harassing people, stealing their land, inflicting -- I mean, impacting their daily life. Every single moment of your existence, you are harassed by the presence of a Jewish settler across every street. When you go out, they harass you. When you walk in the street, they harass you. They harass you -- when you go to collect your crops, they harass you. The Israeli Army is there also to harass. They are not -- it is not -- I mean, I wish you will -- all of you will go there to visit and see how the situation is.

It is not that the -- I asked Mr. Danny Yatom, in the house of Mr. Barak. I told him, "We understand that Israel needs security, but there's difference between security and humiliation." When you stop me on a checkpoint and keep me for four hours --

MR. : Without reason.

MR. RAHMAN: -- without any reason -- why? -- that's a humiliation. That humiliation is not going to be generating goodwill. I said you are turning the Palestinians -- because -- against you. They are -- you are turning them against the peace process also.

We are -- I am sitting here at the dinner table of Mr. Barak. I leave here and I go to my village. Any Israeli soldier can stop me and keep me and harass me and beat me with impunity.

MR. KAUZLARICH: Ambassador Fahmy -- (off mike) -- B. FAHMY: I just wanted to make a comment, not on this question.

MR. KAUZLARICH: Sure.B. FAHMY: When we were invited here originally to come, it was in and around the Arab summit and the implications of the summit, and I want to really close with a very short comment about that.

Whatever can be said, positively or negatively, about the summit, the fact is, the Arab world did try to respond to an Israeli concern by enunciating in clearer terms what it meant by peace. That was the basic question that was being asked the Arab world: Well, is it simply a peace agreement, or is there something more than that? And the Arab world did respond by saying: We're talking about normal relations. Normal relations will always be a function, of course, of what's happening on the ground, but they've said that, to make it clear that they don't mean simply ending hostilities, they mean normal relations.

The question is, why isn't it possible for Israel to say, "Okay, if you give us normal relations, we will give you full withdrawal"? That's the package. It's -- you can't have normal relations if there isn't full withdrawal. The Arabs have now said what Israel wants them to say -- normal relations. It's now time for Israel to say what the Arabs want, which is full withdrawal. If we have that, believe me, the road to peace will be much shorter, in spite of the casualties on both sides, than we believe. The problem is, they don't want to say "full withdrawal." And that's why the conflict continues.

MR. KAUZLARICH: Ambassador Abboud, do you have any last --B. ABOUD: Yes. I think the role of the U.S. at this juncture is absolutely vital, and I'm quite, you know, comfortable with the idea that there is now reactivation of this role. As I said previously, this role depends on the perception in the area of the U.S. playing a balanced role and a role which is acceptable, which is perceived as fair.

We know the domestic constraints. We are not naive. We know that policy issues in this city are settled not only with regards to the premise of the issue, but also to the domestic consideration(s) which have to be taken into account by leaders. I mean, policies are finally decided and carried out by politicians, and politicians have their own constraints, domestically or other.

But in the end of the day, this is -- the situation is at a crossroad. If these domestic considerations are not pushed aside or if the Jewish community in this country do not help the administration achieve a

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balanced role which is aimed at achieving a settlement, which is addressing the grievances of both side(s)
and ending the occupation, the Middle East is not in good shape, and it can deteriorate very quickly.

MR. KAUZLARICH: Thank you.

MR. RAHMAN: Well, I belong to the school of thought within the Palestinian movement that started in 1975, advocating and believing in a two-state solution. And we paid a very, very heavy price within the movement to leave to the movement to come to that position. And I believe it is now the consensus within the Palestinian community that the only solution is through the establishment of an independent Palestinian state next to Israel, on the West Bank and Gaza, living in peace with Israel.

If you look at Palestinian public opinion today, you will have over two-thirds of the Palestinians, notwithstanding the violence, that will support a peace agreement based on a two-state solution on the West Bank and Gaza.

I am afraid that if Mr. Sharon succeeds by bringing more Jewish settlers into the Palestinian territories and changing the political landscape and the geography and the demography of the West Bank, he will be condemning future generations of Palestinians and Arabs and Israelis to further bloodshed and conflict.

I hope he does not succeed, for the sake of our children and the Israeli children; for the sake of this generation and future generations of our people.

Thank you.

MR. KAUZLARICH: Let me just say, on behalf of the Institute, thank you very much to our speakers. It's been a most interesting -- (interrupted by applause).

END

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GRETA VAN SUSTEREN, FOX HOST: Good evening. Thanks for joining us as we go ON THE RECORD. I'm Greta van Susteren.

Tonight the Israeli offensive intensifies in the West Bank, with tanks storming the West Bank's largest city of Nablus, this as some 300 armed Palestinians are still holed up inside the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. For the very latest, let's go to Steve Harrigan in the West Bank town of Ramallah -- Steve.

STEVE HARRIGAN, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Greta, an extremely tensing situation here in Ramallah. We can hear the sounds of gunfire behind us as we speak. It's automatic weapons fire, as well as what sounds to be sniper shots.

This is day seven of the siege of Yasser Arafat. The Palestinian authority leader remains penned up inside his compound here in Ramallah. He is surrounded by Israeli tanks, also now by a new twist. They've thrown barbed wire up around his compound, as well. Israeli military says that they will send in a shipment of food today for the 72-year-old leader. That shipment is said to include tuna,
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cheese, water, bread, and coffee. So on day seven, Mr. Arafat getting a shipment in. It's not clear whether he will accept that shipment or not.

As far as the situation on the streets here goes, also very tense outside of Ramallah. There were clashes during the day between Israeli activists and policemen. Both -- about 2,000 activists, both Jews and Arabs, tried to march here in Ramallah, bringing humanitarian aid, food, water and medicine. They were turned back by baton-wielding police, who also doused them with tear gas.

As far as the situation here in Ramallah, this is a closed military city.

It's a place where people are afraid to go out into the streets. They are afraid of being shot. The only sounds here are the sounds of gunfire and the sounds of Israeli tanks lumbering through these narrow streets and the sounds of sirens, as well.

There is a possible health crisis looming here, as well. There is no running water now in Ramallah. City officials say that that's a result of Israeli shells hitting the water pumps. We can't verify that, but we can say from our position, there has been no running water for at least 24 hours.

Greta, back to you.

VAN SUSTEREN: Steve, thank you very much, reporting live from Ramallah tonight.

Joining us from Tel Aviv, Ariel Sharon's senior adviser, Raanan Gissin.

Sir, thank you for joining me this evening.

RAANAN GISSIN, SHARON SENIOR ADVISER: Good evening.

VAN SUSTEREN: We just heard the report from Ramallah that the condition there

seems pretty grim. How far are the Israelis going to go, in terms of going into Ramallah?

GISSIN: Well, it's not just Ramallah. It's all those places and bases of terrorism that Yasser Arafat has established in order to launch this war of terrorism against us. We are fighting for our homes, and we are carrying the war into the Palestinian territory out of no choice because the suicide bombing that has taken the life of so many of our people and children, old men, and we're still counting the death toll -- by the way, the 26 men -- the 26th victim of the Passover massacre has been brought to burial.

VAN SUSTEREN: Sir...

GISSIN: Finally he was identified.

VAN SUSTEREN: Sir, what is the end of this war? I mean, where are you -- how far are you going to go in this? When are you going to pull out?

GISSIN: The end of every war and the end of this war is peace.

VAN SUSTEREN: And how do you...

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GISSIN: And the only way you can achieve peace is by ensuring that terrorism no longer reigns in our life, like the United States has gone all the way to Afghanistan to ensure that terrorism does not dictate the life of your citizens.

VAN SUSTEREN: Tell me, how do you determine that? At what point have you reached that?

GISSIN: We reach that point after 18 months of a relentless fight of terrorism launched against us, a strategy of terror adopted by Yasser Arafat, a coalition of terror that he constructed, which now has been revealed to be the largest coalition, terrorist coalition, from here to Afghanistan, conducted a war of terrorism against Israeli innocent citizens, targeting innocent men, women and children.

We really were left with no choice after we accepted all the peace proposal, all the cease-fire proposal offered by General Zinni -- and believe me, he did a very laborious and good job in trying to achieve peace here, in trying to institute the cease-fire. The Palestinians rejected each and every offer that he made. Finally, when we accepted the Brigid (ph) proposal, and they rejected it, then immediately following that, we had a wave -- a wave of horrendous amount of suicide bombing against all our towns and cities, from Jerusalem to Petaktikvah (ph) to Haifa, Tel Aviv. Left us with no other choice...

VAN SUSTEREN: Sir...

GISSIN: ... but to conduct this military operation.

VAN SUSTEREN: Sir, what -- what goes through your mind when you hear Steve Harrigan, who's our correspondent on the ground there, talk about the conditions there, in -- like, for instance, in Ramallah, that there's no running water, there's a health crisis? I mean, what do you think when you hear that?

GISSIN: We regret that very much. And believe me, we are doing all in our effort, while the operation takes place, through our civil administration, to restore as much as possible normal life, to restore water and other facilities. And we ensure the transfer of medicine and other food supplies to those cities in which we are conducting these operations.

We are doing this in a very slow manner in order to ensure that as minimal amount of casualties. But the Palestinians are using ambulances to transport suicide bombers and weapons. They're hiding behind churches. They're using churches as shields of terror, which requires us, of course, to go very carefully, to extricate them from there, but not to harm the churches, for example.

VAN SUSTEREN: Sir, in the 30...

GISSIN: We -- we understand the plight...

VAN SUSTEREN: In the 30 seconds we have left, let me just ask a quick question. Can United States help? Is there something we can do?

GISSIN: Well, there's no doubt that the United States plays the most constructive role here. But the United States also understands our right for
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self-defense. We are defending our people and our country. And you see the number of people that have come to join the reserve, even though they weren't called up, in order to defend their country. A hundred percent some of the units showed up.

We are going to finish the job. We are going to finish this operation. And believe me, nothing is going to happen to Arafat. He will remain isolated. And as long as he's isolated, he can't do much damage. Once we finish this operation, there will be a new horizon for a cease-fire and for peace for both our people. This is what we want. We are a peace-seeking nation, but one must understand that we are bleeding, and we're not going to bleed to death.

VAN SUSTEREN: All right, sir, thank you very much for joining me.

Here with me in Washington, PLO spokesman and Palestinian representative to the U.S., **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

Thank you very much for joining me this evening. You know, the thing that is most baffling to, I think, Americans is suicide bombers. What are your thoughts about the suicide bombers?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO U.S.: Well, first of all, we oppose suicide bombing. We have always done so. We don't approve of it. In fact...

VAN SUSTEREN: So there's no training in the school? I mean, I've heard lots of things...

RAHMAN: No, this is nonsense. Believe me. You know, after all, who would like to see their children getting killed and killing others in the process? But we have -- it is not sufficient, really, to we don't like it, it is not good, it is not nice and it is painful. And...

VAN SUSTEREN: Do you condemn -- do you condemn it?

RAHMAN: Oh, we have opposed it. Let me tell you...

VAN SUSTEREN: Opposed it or condemned it?

RAHMAN: Let me say why I say this, because I understand the circumstances that lead people to become suicide bombers. For example, for the last 36 years Israel has controlled the West Bank and Gaza. Three generations of Palestinians were born and raised in those conditions, denied the very basic freedoms that you and everybody else take for granted -- the right to live as a free human being. Your dignity is taken away from you. You are humiliated by a foreign soldier, who has so much weapons at his disposal, and you don't have anything.

VAN SUSTEREN: But...

RAHMAN: So in order to defend yourself, you use what is available to you.

VAN SUSTEREN: Here's the thing that bothers me about it. I understand using weapons and what's available to you, but when you send an 18-year-old...

RAHMAN: You don't send!

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VAN SUSTEREN: Well, no, no, no. OK...

RAHMAN: You don't -- you...

VAN SUSTEREN: Well, when an 18-year-old woman, a young woman who's about to get married, like we just had, would go off and blow herself up and attempt to kill other people, it's very hard for me to understand that in the name of peace.

RAHMAN: Well, it is not in the name of peace. It is in the name of revenge. You know, if you -- if you have an Israeli soldier coming to your house, beating your mother up, stealing your property, destroying your furniture, taking your father in front of you, blindfolded, half naked and humiliated, wouldn't you want to do something to that person who does that to your family? Do you have the time to think rationally, like you and I now thinking?

VAN SUSTEREN: Well, you know, I mean, look, I'm -- you know, we've heard so many facts coming out of the Middle East, of all of it disturbing, whether it's what happens to the Palestinians or the Israelis. But when you're sitting here many thousand miles away, is that unless someone extends the olive branch, takes that first gesture, unless the -- Arafat condemns the terrorists and, you know, publicly condemns it, this is going to go on. It is not going to get better.

RAHMAN: But Greta, look at what's happening today in the Palestinian territories. You have in the city of Ramallah, which is 40,000 people, 30,000 Israeli soldiers for the last five days. You have every single man, woman and child under siege.

VAN SUSTEREN: And Steve Harrigan's report just a minutes ago, live, is a disturbing picture.

RAHMAN: Much more than that. Tell me -- and let Mr. Gissin tell me -- how burying your dead affects the security of the state of Israel? Yesterday...

VAN SUSTEREN: You know -- you know what? You know what, you...

RAHMAN: Yesterday...

VAN SUSTEREN: Your both sides -- though, I'll tell you, both sides sit and point fingers at each other and tell me...

RAHMAN: No, we...

VAN SUSTEREN: ... very disturbing things.

RAHMAN: But tell me how -- when was the last time we have mass graves? It was done in Bosnia by Milosevic, by the Serbian army.

VAN SUSTEREN: Hasan, I'm not -- believe me, I'm not saying this is a good situation. I'm not saying Palestinians aren't hurting.

RAHMAN: So what do you do in front of this situation?

VAN SUSTEREN: I don't know. But unless there's a commitment for peace from

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both sides...

RAHMAN: You know, Israel is fighting the last colonial war and keeping people under occupation!

VAN SUSTEREN: Unfortunately, they've got tanks, and they're winning the colonial war.

RAHMAN: But they cannot win it forever. They should learn from other colonial powers, like France and Algeria, like South Africa against the blacks of South Africa. They don't win.

VAN SUSTEREN: And Hasan...

RAHMAN: You cannot defeat people.

VAN SUSTEREN: And Hasan, believe me, you know, we -- we -- you know, I think Americans want peace for both, but...

RAHMAN: We want peace, too.

VAN SUSTEREN: All right, Hasan. Thank you for joining me this evening.

Up next: President Bush says if you harbor a terrorist, you are a terrorist.

Does that apply to Yasser Arafat? And is the White House watching the Mideast bloodshed from the sidelines?

Also ahead: an update on last night's "You Be the Judge." The attorney for a college baseball star who butchered a cat goes ON THE RECORD against animal rights activists. Then we're going to take your calls tonight at 1-888-TELL-FOX.

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SHOW: CNN Daybreak

April 3, 2002, Wednesday AM ET

NETWORK: CNN Cable Programming

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START: 06.36

"Crossfire". The war in the mideast was debated on CNN's "Crossfire" last night.

Visual - Clip from CNN's "Crossfire"/ Cong. Robert Wexler, Florida, **Hasan Abdel**

Rahman, Chief PLO Rep to the US.

END: 08.00

SEGMENT-ID: 7

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SHOW: CNN CROSSFIRE 19:00

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Transcript # 040200CN.V20

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HEADLINE: Should Colin Powell Go to Middle East?; Should Yasser Arafat Go Away?

GUESTS: Hassan Abdel Rahman, Robert Wexler, Ralph Nader, Pat Buchanan

BYLINE: Paul Begala, Tucker Carlson, Christiane Amanpour

HIGHLIGHT:

As the Middle East conflict heats up, should Secretary of State Colin Powell go to the region? Plus, should Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat be exiled from the West Bank?

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

ANNOUNCER: CROSSFIRE: On the left, James Carville and Paul Begala. On the right, Robert Novak and Tucker Carlson.

In the CROSSFIRE tonight: The Middle East mess. Is it time for Colin Powell to go to the Middle East? And is it time for Yasser Arafat to go away?

Some say they got George W. Bush elected. Now, what does Ralph Nader and Pat Buchanan think of the way the president is running the country? As "Longhorn Lefty" and the "Bow Tie Brawler" prepare to face off, who will prevail?

PAUL BEGALA, CO-HOST: On the left.

TUCKER CARLSON, CO-HOST: I'm on the right. And they're wrong, wrong, wrong.

ANNOUNCER: All tonight on CROSSFIRE.

From the George Washington University, Paul Begala and Tucker Carlson.

BEGALA: Welcome to the all new CROSSFIRE, our second night from our new location right here at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C. This is one of those nights you're going to be

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glad you paid your cable bill because watching Ralph Nader and Pat Buchanan on the stage in front of this live audience ought to be on pay per view.

But first, a more serious topic, deadly serious, fighting between the Israelis and Palestinians shows absolutely no sign of ending soon. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suggests it's time for Yasser Arafat to go into exile. The State Department gives the families of American government employees the green light to leave Jerusalem. President Bush continues to be accused of not doing enough to end the fighting and calls grow louder for Mr. Bush to send Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region.

And late today, Palestinian fighters forced their way into a place that, to Christians all around the world, symbolizes peace. Tonight, there's no peace there.

Let's go live to CNN's Chief International Correspondent, Christiane Amanpour, in Jerusalem. Christiane, what is the latest from Bethlehem?

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR, CHIEF INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT, CNN NEWS: Well, Paul, the situation in the Church of the Nativity, the birthplace of Jesus Christ, we're being told by Palestinians inside that what happened was many Palestinians, men and others, including families, apparently, went in there to seek sanctuary. Some of those are armed. We're told that most of those with arms are part of the security services, the Palestinian security services.

We can't get a good idea of exactly what's going on militarily from the Israelis because they won't comment as military operations are underway. And they say that that operation there is underway. We're told there is no actual fighting at the moment around that church or that - but there has been early this evening and it is still surrounded by tanks.

Earlier this evening, also, Palestinians telling us that four Palestinian men were shot by the Israeli forces today, apparently, these men belonging to the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, that militant organization alive with Yasser Arafat's Fatah organization. So that's what's going on there at this moment.

Paul?

CARSON: Christiane, this is Tucker Carlson. Is there any sense that Yasser Arafat would ever take Ariel Sharon up on his offer of a one-way ticket out of Ramallah?

AMANPOUR: No. And obviously, quite the opposite. He's made it quite clear in some of those mobile phone and other broadcasts that have come out of that compound over the last five days that he's not going anywhere and certainly not going anywhere voluntarily.

And in addition from the Israelis, essentially what Ariel Sharon said today was quite evidently his heartfelt view and his heartfelt desire. But he's always floated that view in a cabinet session, the emergency session on Friday before the military invasion. And most of the cabinet decided against exile and for isolation. And that appears to be the strategy that is still underway at the moment. And there is little inclination by most of the Israelis, we're told here, that Arafat should, in fact, be exiled.

CARLSON: OK. Thanks, Christiane. Christiane Amanpour will be back at the top of the hour for LIVE FROM JERUSALEM.

And now, to our CROSSFIRE, our guest tonight, joining us from the left, Robert Wexler of Florida, a Democrat. He's a member of the House International Relations Committee and Hassan Abdel Rahman, the chief PLO representative of the United Nations.

BEGALA: Welcome to the new CROSSFIRE. Mr. Rahman, if I may start with you. We heard this report from Christiane Amanpour a few hours ago. The Palestinians forced their way into what to Christians is one of the most sacred sites on earth, the Church of the Nativity. Is this a valid military strategy, to invade a church?

HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PLO REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED STATES: First of all, the Palestinians are also Christians, as you may know. And the inhabitants of Bethlehem are mostly Christians, 90 percent of them. In the face of an Israeli invasion of their city, they look for sanctuaries to hide. And they are hiding in a church, hoping that they will be protected because the

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experience of the Palestinians so far in other cities like in Ramallah and Jenin and Qalqilia, they were massacred in mass by the Israelis. Today, before I left my office, I witnessed the burial of 29 people in the yard of the hospital of Ramallah.

BEGALA: Let me bring you back to Bethlehem, though, for a minute. I want to make sure I'm clear about this. You endorse the use of force to take over the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, which is what apparently has happened, the Associated Press and CNN reports.

RAHMAN: I have had a conversation with Michele Sabat this morning, who is the representative of the Pope. He invited Palestinians to come and hide because the Israelis kill indiscriminately in Bethlehem...

BEGALA: So you're saying that the Pope has invited the Palestinians into the Church of the Nativity?

RAHMAN: Not the Pope. I said the priests invited the people to come and hide. And there are very, very few armed people. The rest are civilians, Christians who are seeking sanctuary in the church.

CARLSON: Now, Congressman Wexler, Prime Minister Sharon, many people in Israel, many supporters of Israel here in the United States make the same point. They say Yasser Arafat is essentially a criminal. He's not a legitimate national leader. I'll buy that. Then why not just seize him and put him on trial?

ROBERT WEXLER (D-FL), MEMBER, HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE: Well, it's bigger than that, Tucker. A nation which Sharon is elected to represent has to defend itself. And in order to defend himself, in order to defend his people, he's got to go in and ferret out the roots of terrorism. That's what Yasser Arafat was supposed to do under the peace process but has failed, unfortunately, to do. So Prime Minister Sharon, in order to protect himself and his people, has got to root out the sources of terrorism. Putting Yasser Arafat on trial is not going to stop suicide bombings.

CARLSON: Sharon has made the point again and again and many supporters of Israel here again in the United States, make the same point, that at the root of terrorism in the region is Yasser Arafat. Sharon says that all the time. Now, if that's true and I assume you believe it is true, then why play these silly games and surround his office and keep him in Ramallah? Why not just take him and remove him from the scene if he's the root of it?

WEXLER: I'm not going to defend Yasser Arafat in any way. But the Prime Minister of Israel has decided that the best course of action is to isolate him. The European community, the international community, if he were to go further, would go even more wild than they already are.

So I think what Sharon is doing is similar to what he did in his first several months of office. He's trying to show some degree of restraint under an unbelievable situation where his people are getting blown to shreds every day. And they've tried day in and day out with General Zinni most recently, to get the Palestinian Authority to move against terrorism but they didn't. So now, Sharon's response is OK, if you don't do it, Arafat, I'll do it. And this is what we're seeing.

BEGALA: Mr. Rahman, about those people who have been blown to bits. I want to know point blank, does the Palestinian Authority support, condone or finance suicide bombings?

RAHMAN: No, no, no.

BEGALA: I'd like you then to take a look at a story that's running today on "Ha'aretz Daily", a Web site which purports...

RAHMAN: Let me - let me - let me finish.

BEGALA: ... to show, sir, a receipt for reimbursement for equipment for suicide bombs.

RAHMAN: This is - this is a fraud by the Israeli intelligence, sir. The Israelis have a department that specializes in putting out lies.

BEGALA: Let me - let me show you what this is. Before you - before you dispute it, let me first show our audience so they know what we're talking about. It was from today's "Ha'aretz," which is a

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respected paper in the Middle East. This is what - this is what the purported receipt said. It was presented to the Palestinian Authorities in faith. "The cost of supplying electronic and chemical components for explosive devices and bombs, this was our largest expense. The cost of preparing a bomb is at least shekels - 700 shekels. We need to equip five to nine bombs each week for ourselves in various locations, 5,000 shekels times four weeks equals 20,000 shekels." That sounds to me, sir...

RAHMAN: That is nonsense.

BEGALA: ... like a request for reimbursement for bombs.

RAHMAN: That is nonsense. And I must tell you that this is a lie by the Israeli Intelligence with the hope to tarnish the image of the PLO. But let me tell you who are the terrorists. Mr. Sharon, Mr. Wexler, has made a career of being a terrorist. His whole life is a terrorist. Mr. Sharon has on his hands the blood of tens of thousands of...

BEGALA: Mr. Sharon is not financing suicide bombers.

RAHMAN: Let me finish what I am saying. Don't interrupt me, please. What I'm trying to say...

BEGALA: I can answer what I'm asking...

RAHMAN: Well, I - you asked me and I answer. I am answering you about what Mr. Sharon is committing against the Palestinian people. Mr. Sharon today is having 3.5 million Palestinian under siege, men, women, children are under a state of siege. Therefore, and we - he has - the city of Ramallah has 25,000 people. He has 40,000 Israeli soldiers, one soldier and half for every citizen. And he has 400 tents. Is the West Bank a runaway province of Israel?

WEXLER: Mr. Begala asks - Mr. Begala asks whether or not your...

RAHMAN: Mr. Sharon is leading a terrorist government. Yes, there are Palestinians who commit act of violence. But when it becomes the policy of the state of Israel, the state of Israel's policy...

WEXLER: This isn't a matter - this isn't a matter of Israeli Intelligence.

RAHMAN: Of course.

WEXLER: The United States State Department has determined that divisions of Fatah, Yasser Arafat's administration, is deserving to be on the terrorist list. Why? Because there used to be a time - let me finish...

RAHMAN: You know why? Because (UNINTELLIGIBLE) people like you in Congress...

WEXLER: Oh, yes.

RAHMAN: ... who serve Israeli interests and not American interests.

WEXLER: Thank you very much, Mr. Rahman.

RAHMAN: You present more Israel than American, Mr. Wexler.

WEXLER: The fact of the matter is, Mr. Rahman, is that there used to be a time when Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the like could be distinguished from Fatah. When Fatah negotiated, Hamas blew things up. But today, that's no longer the case. Yasser Arafat's Fatah division is blowing up people.

RAHMAN: That's is nonsense. That is nonsense.

WEXLER: Unfortunately, Mr. Rahman,...

RAHMAN: You know what somebody told me? You know what somebody told me today? He said give me an F-16 airplane. Give me a tank. Give me a Apache helicopter and I would not use bombs against Israel.

WEXLER: So it'd just be more effective killing.

RAHMAN: Because the Israeli are using those weapons...

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WEXLER: That does not calm my heart as an American to know that what you want is...

CARLSON: The Palestinian suicide bombings against Israel are the fault of the United States, that the U.S. has driven Palestinians to this?

RAHMAN: No, I am not saying that. I am saying that there are fair Palestinian people who for the last 36 years, living in a constant state of terror by Israel under an illegal foreign military occupation. If your country is occupied by a foreign army, what would you do? If your country is invaded by Jewish settlers from New York and from Moscow, coming to build exclusive Jewish settlements in your country, what would you do?

CARLSON: Mr. Wexler, answer that. I mean, are the settlers exacerbating the tension there? They are, aren't they?

WEXLER: From 1948 to - oh, I'll answer it. From 1948 to...

(CROSSTALK)

CARLSON: Hold it. Who's paying (UNINTELLIGIBLE)?

RAHMAN: The extremist Jews in this country and he's paid by most of them.

WEXLER: OK. Thank you, Mr. Rahman.

CARLSON: He's talking about the taxpayers (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

WEXLER: Yes. From 1948 to 1967, Israel occupied not a single inch of Arab land. Yet, there was terrorism in Israel, unfortunately, a great deal of it. When Yitzhak Rabin was the Prime Minister of Israel and he was negotiating, when Prime Minister Barak was the Prime Minister of Israel and all but gave Yasser Arafat 90-plus percent of the West Bank and half of Jerusalem, there was still terrorism.

The fact of the matter is and all Americans need to understand this that is Israel and what the Palestinians are doing with respect to suicide bombs is a test. It's test one. And it's within this ring of terrorism that we know.

CARLSON: I don't think you all have convinced each other yet.

RAHMAN: You know what...

CARLSON: But there's still time. Mr. Rahman, I'm afraid I'm going to have to - we're going to...

RAHMAN: The desperation that the Israelis ...

CARLSON: I beg your pardon. We're going to have to take a break right here. And we'll continue when CROSSFIRE continues. We'll continue to speak with our guests and we'll let our audience have a crack at them, as well.

And later, in what two sports are the experts usually wrong? You'll find the answer in our quote of the day. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CARLSON: Welcome back. Our guests, surprisingly, are still with us. With us tonight to debate the continuing crisis in the Middle East, Democratic Congressman, Robert Wexler of Florida and Hassan Abdel Rahman, the Chief PLO Representative to the United States.

Now, Congressman Wexler, I'm a supporter of Israel. But I don't take exception to almost everything you said, as much as I hate to admit that. But one thing I have to say. It's very striking. Whenever you hear an Israeli spokesman talk about the attacks on Israeli citizens, you always see a comparison to September 11th. And I'm wondering if you find that insulting because, in fact, the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians have been going on for 50 years. It's essentially a war. And it's really not at all analogous to what happened in the surprise attack in the U.S. on September 11th.

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WEXLER: I think the best way to present it is really the way that President Bush presented it. And that is that essentially, the United States, in order to defeat international terrorism, has to have a zero tolerance policy for terrorism, whether that terrorism emanates from Afghanistan, whether the terrorism emanates from the West Bank or from Iran, Iraq and Syria. And I think that's the best way in which America can deal with this problem to protect our own citizens. And...

CARLSON: Wait, wait, wait. You say that and yet, moments ago, you said you approved of the current situation where Yasser Arafat, who you're implying is a terrorist, is allowed to just sit and hang out in Ramallah. It strikes me as an inconsistent point of view.

WEXLER: I don't - I don't approve of anything that Yasser Arafat is doing. But what I do appreciate is the nuances that are involved in the Middle East peace process. Just like the president said, the United States has a variety of interests. And we have to be careful when we move. And when we move, things tend to be exaggerated.

And if we're going to bring Israelis and Palestinians to a negotiation table, which is what should be our goal, we have to be very careful to be coherent and consistent. And I would argue that consistency means they can certainly have no tolerance for terrorism. Call it like it is. And we need to call Yasser Arafat for what he's been doing. And that is harboring and inciting terrorism. And that, unfortunately, is a change from the way he was behaving when he was negotiating. And that's the great tragedy.

BEGALA: Let me ask Mr. Rahman about something that Mr. Arafat said. In our first segment, you stunned me and maybe our audience by, sort of, without any evidence, claiming that a perfectly credible report proving Palestinian support for the suicide bombings and financing was somehow made up by Israeli Intelligence. Let me read you a quote from Yasser Arafat to "Al-Jazeera," speaking to his folks in his language from the "Washington Post." Let me read it to you.

"We have chosen a path. We will either be a martyr for our sons and daughters" - it's up here on the screen - "and will raise the flag of Palestine over the churches and mosques of Jerusalem. We are all potential martyrs, the whole Palestinian people."

Now, those are Yasser Arafat's words,...

RAHMAN: Yes.

BEGALA: ... not - so your goal is not, in fact, to peacefully coexist with two states, one Palestinian and one Israeli, but instead, have the flag over every church, every mosque in the Holy Land.

RAHMAN: Well, those churches and those mosques in Jerusalem are Palestinian churches and Palestinian mosques. They're not Israeli mosques. Israelis do not have mosques. Israelis have synagogues. So Yasser Arafat is talking about his own occupied mosques and churches in Jerusalem.

BEGALA: No. He's simply saying...

RAHMAN: Absolutely. And those are under Israeli occupation. No one in the world accepted Israel's annexation of Jerusalem.

BEGALA: OK...

RAHMAN: Even in the United States, the closest allies of the United States, of Israel, considers Israeli action in Jerusalem as illegal.

BEGALA: So you want me to believe that your goal really is just peaceful coexistence with Israel?

RAHMAN: Well, I'm...

BEGALA: Well, what about what Arafat said, our goal is from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River, a state?

RAHMAN: I will answer. Yasser Arafat never said that. Let me tell you what. Yasser Arafat...

BEGALA: (UNINTELLIGIBLE). That's a good point.

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RAHMAN: Yasser - not even Faisal Hussein (ph).

BEGALA: Certainly.

RAHMAN: Yasser Arafat signed an agreement with Israel for a peace between two states, the Palestinian state and the Israeli state. What happened during seven years of negotiations, Mr. Barak and Mr. Netanyahu moved 100,000 Jewish settlers into the territories that was supposed to be a Palestinian state. Is that good will?

WEXLER: You play the victim card very well.

RAHMAN: It is not a victim.

WEXLER: But you cannot - you cannot deny history.

RAHMAN: I don't want to be a victim. I don't think Jordan is a victim.

WEXLER: History is obvious. Mr. Rahman...

RAHMAN: I want to be a free man in my own country.

WEXLER: Yes, sir. And you deserve to be a free man, Mr. Rahman. And the President of the United States, Bill Clinton, gave you your opportunities and Yasser Arafat walked away and your people went to a suicide bombing strategy.

RAHMAN: I was there. You were not there in Camp David. I was there in Camp David. You were not there.

WEXLER: Mr. Rahman, you should be a free man.

RAHMAN: And I was - and I was...

WEXLER: But your leader doesn't take you to the promised land. He'd rather be a suicide bomber.

RAHMAN: But, you know, I was born - I was born as a free man. And I have the right to be a free man. And these - I cannot be a free man if the Israeli army sends 1,000 tanks. You, as a Jew, should be outraged...

WEXLER: Yes. Mr. Rahman,...

RAHMAN: ... by the invasion of the West Bank by the Israeli army. It is reminiscent of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Mr. Wexler...

CARLSON: Mr. Rahman, that is going to have to be...

RAHMAN: To have - to have massive graves...

(CROSSTALK)

BEGALA: I am very grateful to...

CARLSON: On that low note...

BEGALA: ... both of you - to both of you for showing up. But Congressman Wexler, thank you. Mr. Rahman, thank you very much for a very enlightening and hot debate, hopefully (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

Coming up, in the CROSSFIRE "News Alert", what "Playgirl" is trying to do to end the cover-up at Enron? And this, two underdogs and two very improbable victories. It's our quote of the day.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CARLSON: And now, those stories you won't find anywhere else, the CROSSFIRE "News Alert."

First up, it's been unfashionable since the end of the Taft administration. And again, it's been unfashionable since the end of the Taft administration. Now, being fat is officially classified as a disease. That, according to experts at the Internal Revenue Service, who today, ruled that weight loss programs, when ordered by a physician, can be tax deductible.

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Quote, "Obesity is medically accepted to be a disease in its own right," the IRS declared. The announcement set off frantic lobbying campaigns by the flat chested, the weak chin and those with bad hair, who will now seek their own appearance-related deductions. We'll keep you posted.

BEGALA: You think I should go in for a little cosmetic surgery? It's popular at Fox, I understand.

"Playgirl" magazine has announced that it will feature the men of Enron, au naturale. I wonder if they are going to feature any of George W. Bush's men of Enron, like Army Secretary Thomas White, a former top Enron executive, National Economic Council Chairman Larry Lindsey, a former Enron consultant, Chief Bush political Carl Rove, a major Enron stockholder even while he was working in the White House or U.S. Trade Representative, Robert Zelick (ph), another veteran of the Enron gravy train. Come on, guys. It's time to go for the full Monty.

And in medical news, Paul Begala has been ordered to take a deep breath. Just kidding. How would you feel if Osama bin Laden called your cell phone? It could happen. The "New York Post" says a Washington state man, identified only as Bob from Spokane, has registered his ID in the name of the fugitive Saudi terrorist. When Bob from Spokane calls, Osama from Kandahar appears on the screen. Funny? The FBI didn't think so. There's nothing illegal about it. But an agent contacted Bob the other day to notify him that the practice is, quote, "in poor taste."

Well, I feel better that the FBI is policing good taste. And by the way, that was not Bob Novak by any chance, was it?

And now, our momentous event, the quote of the day is from none other than the President of the United States. In a meeting today with the Super Bowl champion, New England Patriots.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE United States: I remember watching all the experts talk about the Super Bowl. No one thought they'd win. They learned what I learned, that in politics and sports, the experts are often wrong.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BEGALA: The experts can actually count, though, Mr. President. The Patriots scored more points. They won. You got fewer votes and you got in because of a rigged deal from the Supreme Court.

CARLSON: That is, I'd have to say, the cheapest applause line I've ever seen. But, you know, I hope he keeps saying that, spitting (ph) this ludicrous theory. You and your pals from the Flat Earth Society can keep talking about who you (ph) really won the election of 2002 all the way through the election of 2004 when you get crushed like insects yet again. That is not a line that will get you anywhere (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

BEGALA: Do you know what? In New England...

CARLSON: That's (UNINTELLIGIBLE) false.

BEGALA: New England would have lost the Super Bowl if Chief Justice Rink (ph) was a referee.

But, on that - on that wonderful line, chief justice is watching, thank you, sir. And there are no cases of mine pending before you.

When we come back, a CNN "News Alert," including would you vote for candidates favoring a tax cut or a balanced budget? We've got some results of the new poll. And the Middle East mess and soaring gas prices. We'll tackle that hot issue with our guests, Ralph Nader and Pat Buchanan.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(NEWS BREAK)

BEGALA: And unless you've been hiding in a cave or you don't drive a car, you probably noticed that you've been slammed by high gas prices lately. And they're still soaring. Nationwide, gas prices are up

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23 cents a gallon just over the last four weeks. The average for regular gasoline now is a stunning \$1.37 a gallon.

Well, what's to blame? The Middle East conflict? Driving more since September 11? Our constant dependence on foreign oil? Those are just some of the reasons. Well, we'll have a few more to talk about on the energy, the Mideast and politics and try to get to the bottom of the current spike in energy prices.

Please give a hearty welcome to our guests, in the crossfire, Ralph Nader, former green party presidential candidate and on the right, Pat J. Buchanan, former Reform Party candidate and a co-host of this broadcast, ladies and gentlemen. Nader and Buchanan.

CARLSON: Ralph Nader, thanks for joining us. We're at a college, so you have fans. You know, when you look at the situation in the Middle East, apart from the obvious sadness one feels at seeing all the deaths that are taking place, it makes you wonder, can the United States afford to be dependent on foreign oil to the extent it is? And isn't this an obvious and compelling argument for drilling in Anwar?

RALPH NADER, FMR. GREEN PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: No, it's an obvious and compelling argument for more fuel efficiency for cars, heating systems, lighting systems. All the things the Department of Transportation, National Academy of Science, experts at the California Energy Commission have pointed out for years.

In fact, the most safest car and the most fuel efficient car was produced under contract by the Department of Transportation 25 years ago with Chrysler and Cornell Aero lab. It came in at 2600 pounds to 3100 pounds. That's small. And it was the safest car ever built. It had 31 miles per gallon.

CARLSON: I'd rather drive a Suburban for safety. But look, I mean...

NADER: But the Honda Civic is safer than the GM Suburban.

CARLSON: I don't believe that for a second.

NADER: Yes, it is.

CARLSON: Despite our phony studies. But look...

NADER: Tucker, just check out autosafety.org. You'll get all the data on...

CARLSON: You know I've bookmarked it on my computer. Funny you said that. You know, look, I have no doubt that wind power will some day solve all our problems. But until it does, and it's a long way off, safe standards are not going to be manageable, as you know.

We need oil now. And there's a lot of it in Alaska. It would have virtually no effect on the environment. What really is the rationale for not drilling there?

NADER: First of all, Clinton opened up large areas of northern Alaska for the companies. They haven't gone into those yet. They're just focusing on the refuge because it happens to be a big in the oil circles. It's like an imaginable line between if you're for them or against them.

Do you know that the earliest -- if they find adequate oil in the refuge, they won't drill a barrel for seven years to begin with? There's no guarantee it won't be sold to Japan, because the oil companies don't want to be restricted to the U.S. They want it to be sold for the highest prices abroad.

But the key is, energy efficiency, renewable energy. This has been documented -- what do you have against it?

CARLSON: (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

BEGALA: Before I give you the drilling on drilling, I want to -- have one quick question about the Middle East.

NADER: Sure.

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BEGALA: We both of you have actually have been rather outspoken. I want to read you a quotation, ask you if agree with it. I want to put it up on the screen right here. It's from October of the year 2000. This is a quote. Mr. Nader, if you could take a look.

"Who are the forces that are producing most of the violence? The overwhelming excessive use of forces is by the Israeli military." Now that was in October of 2000. Do you agree with that statement?

PAT BUCHANAN, FMR. REFORM PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Yes, today it certainly is by the Israeli military. There's no doubt about it. The point is...

BEGALA: That statement, by the way, was from Ralph Nader. Would he have been the Secretary of State in the Buchanan cabinet?

BUCHANAN: Well, the point is your guy got beat. And Ralph and I helped beat him. OK?

BEGALA: My guy got more votes than your guy. So...

BUCHANAN: He didn't do as well as he should have done in Palm Beach County, but let's talk about this -- let's talk about just what you said. Look...

BEGALA: Israel is to blame for violence is your solution.

BUCHANAN: Terrorism is evil. The United States stands beside the Israelis in their war against terror, but we should not stand with the Israelis in their war on Palestine and the Palestinian people, who have the same God-given right to a homeland, a state, and a nation, as do the Israelis.

BEGALA: What if that terrorism is committed by Palestinians? What the heck is going on? It's very nice to draw a distinction, say we won't declare war on terrorism, but not on Palestinians. These suicide bombers are, in fact, Palestinians coming into Israel and blowing themselves up at pizzerias and killing children. That's not something they have a legitimate right to stop?

BUCHANAN: Two of the Israeli prime minister, Menachim Begin, blew up the King David Hotel. He perpetrated the massacre at the Yir Yassin (ph). 200 Palestinian men, women, children killed.

BEGALA: So eye for an eye?

BUCHANAN: No. What it is is good causes sometimes use evil means. We condemn the evil means, but the cause of Palestinian independence in a homeland is one the Americans ought to support as we condemn terrorism.

BEGALA: So should Martin Luther King have used terrorism?

BUCHANAN: He didn't use terrorism.

BEGALA: What? Yes, he did. And Arafat will fail, because he did.

BUCHANAN: He succeeded because he was up against a country in which you can use civil disobedience. If Gandhi had laid down in front of the trains in Nazi Germany, there might not have been...

BEGALA: But we're talking about Israeli here, a free democratic society, not Nazi Germany.

BUCHANAN: All right, look, I agree with the Palestinian...

BEGALA: There's a big difference between Israel and Nazi Germany.

BUCHANAN: But look, do you believe, I mean Mr. Rahman asked you this, do you believe the Palestinian people have the same right to use force to create a homeland and nation of their own, that we used against the British to throw them out of our country?

BEGALA: We did not blow up restaurants, children, pizza places, the way that the Palestinians...

BUCHANAN: Do you want to answer the question or talk about -- look, I condemn terror. Do they have the same right to use force to drive people out of their homeland and to create their own nation as the Americans did?

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CARLSON: Oh, that is an outrageous...

BEGALA: It's a complete...

CARLSON: Wait. Ralph Nader, you want to be president. And by the way, congratulations for electing a marvelous president. But if you were president, I mean, do you agree with Pat Buchanan? I mean, what would you do differently than this president's doing now?

NADER: Paul is the not interested in the settlement. He's interested in scoring points. If you want a peaceful settlement between the Israelis and the Palestinians, you preserve Israeli security and Palestinian justice. And you support the peace forces in Israel. They are very strong. They are very articulate. And at times they've put in...

CARLSON: These forces in Israel are very strong right now?

NADER: Very, very, very strong.

CARLSON: I mean, I don't know what country you're talking about. I mean, they just selected Sharon. I mean...

NADER: No, they're very strong in terms of their ability to raise the conscience of the country and to put 100,000 people in demonstrations in Tel Aviv, before all this latest trouble started. The reservists that are refusing to serve in the West Bank, Beth Salaam (ph), the magnificent civil liberties group in Israel, why aren't we supporting...

CARLSON: So demonstrations, that's your foreign policy goal as president?

NADER: No, I'm saying that if we, with our leverage in the Middle East, are really interested in a peaceful settlement, we would support the peace forces on both sides, not the extremists, and the militarists on both sides.

BUCHANAN: Let me step in here...

CARLSON: Actually, we have to take a quick break. Actually, we're going to -- Pat, we're just going to commercial for a moment.

Coming up on the new and improved CROSSFIRE, we'll continue our debate with the living icons of both left and right, Pat Buchanan and Ralph Nader. How would the world be different if one of them hadn't run for president? We'll ask them. Also your chance to fireback at us. And of course, our opportunity to fire back at you. Be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CARLSON: Welcome back to CROSSFIRE. Their enemies call them spoilers. Their fans call them heroes. We call them perfect CROSSFIRE guests. Joining us tonight, Pat Buchanan and Ralph Nader.

BEGALA: Mr. Buchanan, let's go back to...

BUCHANAN: You can call me Pat.

BEGALA: Pat, thank you. Welcome back to energy policy though. Let me return to that. As an American patriot, which I know you to be -- which I know you to be. As an American patriot, was it unpatriotic for corporate America to kill the fuel economy standards that were before the Congress, that would have saved American oil by reducing our dependence on it?

BUCHANAN: You mean the cafe standards?

BEGALA: Right, the corporate average fuel economy standards.

BUCHANAN: You know, I really believe in the market. I really do. I'm a conservative in that sense. And I think if the price of oil and gasoline goes up, that will regulate it. I do not believe in the cafe standards. I disagree with my friend Ralph on this.

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As I say, I've got a Lincoln Navigator. And I think it's a very safe car. I think that's the reason I got it. I enjoy driving it. I probably pay a lot more for gasoline. And -- but no, I don't think the government should arbitrarily set that. Let the free market do it.

BEGALA: But they set the standards that it has today back in the '70s, which is why it's doing better than it would have otherwise. Detroit always tells us they can't. They always tell us. They said that seatbelts and safety glass, air bags, would all break -- bankrupt corporate America.

BUCHANAN: Paul Begala, you've never created a job in your life. The guys in Detroit know more...

BEGALA: What, and you have?

BUCHANAN: The guys in Detroit know more about making cars than you do.

BEGALA: Sure, let's trust Enron and Exxon. And they should run everything. Isn't that the Pat Buchanan...

CARLSON: That is totally -- I mean, Paul, that is so -- look, and speaking of corporate conspiracy theories, I know you're no stranger to those, Mr. Nader, a lot of people on the left have been saying look, there's this energy-related conspiracy. This administration's in bed with the big energy companies, etcetera, etcetera. And you better, you know, release the documents you used to formulate American energy policies.

So a judge orders this. The documents come out. Some are adopted. Most are whole. What did we learn? Well, we learned that the chief of staff to the Energy Secretary went to the dentist. His teeth are in good shape. We learned that the Energy Secretary on a trip abroad got snacks at 7:00 p.m. We learned that when he went to New Mexico, he was told to wear Dockers and a dress shirt, cotton.

We learned essentially nothing. We learned of no conspiracy. We learned all sorts of personal details that the left is always telling us ought to be off limits in political discourse? Aren't you embarrassed as a person who demanded these...?

NADER: We don't have to look at those documents. The Bush administration's marinated in oil. It's all for big oil, big gas.

CARLSON: That is -- I mean, give me a break.

NADER: Marinated in oil.

CARLSON: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) it's marinated in oil? What does that mean?

NADER: Just look at this. This company said it's going to be big business day with events all over the country, including Washington on the Enron supermarket of corporate crime fraud and abuse and accounting shenanigans. You know, all the things even you admit.

CARLSON: I'll be celebrating, yes.

NADER: The Web site, by the way, is citizenworks.org for those who are interested. Let me point this out. The biggest job loss in the auto industry in our generation occurred in the late '70s and early '80s when the Japanese came in with fuel-efficient cars. We lost over 100,000 jobs that way. Now they're doing it again. The Detroit executives...

CARLSON: But there were domestic attacks in the auto industry, remember, too.

NADER: Wait. Detroit, the executives in GM, Ford and Chrysler are continually having their head in the sand. Here's come Toyota and Honda with 48, 56, 58 miles per gallon hybrid cars. They can't sell them fast enough. And what's happening? It's happening again. The auto companies are in Detroit...

CARLSON: Wait a minute, are you lecturing the auto companies on business efficiency?

NADER: No, I'm saying.

CARLSON: Are you serious? I mean, can you run GM more efficiently than GM?

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NADER: Of course. Are you kidding? Listen, they lost almost half the market. And you...

CARLSON: (UNINTELLIGIBLE). You're smarter than I realized.

NADER: No, no. The engineers in Detroit have the answer and they've had it for years.

CARLSON: Oh.

NADER: It's fuel efficiency, pollution control, and safety.

BEGALA: When you served President Nixon in the White House, it was reported that you advised him to burn the tapes. Should Dick Cheney burn the records of that secret Enron task force that are likely to incriminate him the way those tapes incriminated Nixon?

BUCHANAN: No, no, no. I think Nixon should've burned the tapes because they were tapes of deep, personal conversations. People didn't know they were being taped. I thought it was wrong. And I recommended that the president burn the tapes.

Now with regard to Dick Cheney, he, in my judgment, is standing up for principle here, which is that in his communications with certain people, he believes that as a part of the executive branch and elected office, they should remain confidential. And he's gone the right way. He has gone to the federal courts to argue that principle. What in heaven's name is wrong with that?

BEGALA: There's a federal principle that you think that a vice president and his staff should be able to be lobbied by corporate America in secret, and we not know about it?

BUCHANAN: But look...

BEGALA: When the environmentalists met with him for the phony baloney meeting, he paraded them in front of the cameras. So it wasn't any kind of confidentiality. It was to cover up the trail.

BUCHANAN: But look, I mean, I don't -- if Senator Kennedy is meeting with various people on the Hill, that's his business, not mine. And it's Dick Cheney's business.

CARLSON: OK, you have the last word. We're running out of time.

BUCHANAN: And it's a member of the cabinet, they can call the cabinet member up there, but they cannot call the vice president of the United States.

NADER: The key is technology. It's here. It's proven. It's around the world to deal with the energy problem. Renewable energy, energy efficiency. Go to Professor Robert Williams at Princeton. Go to the leading expert, Arthur Rosenfeld, the California Energy Commission. Those are the people that were consulted.

CARLSON: And solo.

NADER: And go solo.

CARLSON: Go solo.

(CROSSTALK)

NADER: Does it have something to do with your tan?

BEGALA: Ralph Nader, Pat Buchanan, I want to thank you both for joining us. Believe me, we're going to have you back.

BUCHANAN: Repeal NAFTA. All right?

BEGALA: Don't tell me that. Just ahead -- I'm going to take the gloves off and whoop Tucker upside the head. It's all part of what we call "round 6." And also, your chance to take off the gloves and fire back at us. Let's tee it up. Let's go.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

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CARLSON: It's that time. No guests, no gloves, and this means you, Paul Begala, no whimpering. It's round 6. CROSSFIRE distilled to its essence, pure debate. Here we go.

Now Paul, I don't know if you were at the National Press Club today. If you were, you would have seen a global warming conference. People concerned about global warming. Among them, those noted climatologists Ben & Jerry, makers of chunky monkey, ice cream manufacturers.

Very upset. But at the very same time, "The New York Times" science section comes out with a piece on Antarctica, saying Antarctica is in fact melting. But here's the catch, it's also freezing, which is to say nobody really knows what's happening with global warming. Nobody can prove it exists. Nobody can prove it doesn't exist. And you hear these ice cream makers are wading into the middle of this incredibly complex debate like they do. It's ridiculous.

BEGALA: Well, even George W. Bush, whose IQ's hovers around room temperature speaking of global warming.

CARLSON: No.

BEGALA: Acknowledges that there is global climate change. What Ben & Jerry are doing -- I admire this greatly. They're setting an example. They've created a new flavor, one sweet world. Everybody should go and buy that and eat that. And they're reducing their own carbon dioxide emissions by 10 percent. Now they're a successful, profitable, capitalist company, reducing their emissions. I say God bless Ben & Jerry.

CARLSON: You don't see -- you actually don't look at this and just see the on its face ludicrousness? This is like Orville Redenbacher taking a stand on human cloning. I mean, these people make -- no, but it is. They make ice cream.

I like the ice cream, but who is a spokesman for something as complicated, as complex, and frankly, as important as global warming?

BEGALA: They were also joined by the president of the Union of Concerned Scientists.

CARLSON: Well, that's -- you're making my point exactly. People who have no idea what they're talking about.

BEGALA: The National Academy of Sciences...

CARLSON: No. But isn't it typical? Isn't it typical? It's always to, rather than make a cogent, well-explained case for or against something, liberals always bring the dopey -- it's always Carly Simon up there, arguing for -- why is that?

BEGALA: We have finally found a corporation that Tucker will criticize. It happens to be Ben & Jerry's.

CARLSON: Actually, I like Ben & Jerry's. They ought to lay off the science, though.

BEGALA: Issue number two. Not as much fun. Take a look at this picture. John Walker Lindh, the American Taliban, alleged, his defense team now alleges that he was tortured. We see that picture. He apparently seems to be restrained there. But my own view is, now I don't believe...

CARLSON: Wait, you said this wasn't going to be as much fun as Ben & Jerry's. But I look at that, and I say actually, that's pretty amusing.

BEGALA: I have a different view of fun maybe, but that's for the weekend. I don't believe the reports, the allegations that he was tortured. But we wouldn't even have to worry about it if the Bush administration had played by the rules, treated him like what he is, an American.

When the right wing FBI spy, Robert Hanssen came up, the Clinton administration prosecuted him successfully by guaranteeing his rights. Walker Lindh was not allowed to see his attorney.

CARLSON: Really? Paul, I'm sorry, if you just wake up, my son. That was in northern Virginia. This took place in Afghanistan.

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BEGALA: They should've brought his lawyer over there.

On the other side -- it was the matter of a battle. You've got to be kidding. They couldn't prove for over a week that he in fact was an American. He spoke English with an Arabic accent. It wasn't here who he was.

BEGALA: Arabic accent he picked up in Marin County. Just give him his lawyer, read him his rights.

CARLSON: You've seen the tape. The guy spoke with an accent. But look, with a lawyer in the middle of a war zone, why is it the Democrats, whenever anything happens, that you need a lawyer in the middle of this? It's a very telling instinct you have.

BEGALA: Because we are a nation of laws.

CARLSON: Yes, right. Give me a break.

BEGALA: Coming up next on the new CROSSFIRE could be your chance to fire back at Tucker and me. You're not going to want to miss that.

CARLSON: Yeah, good luck.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BEGALA: It is finally here, the moment you've been waiting for. Your turn to fire back at us. First, we're going to look at the fire we received from the e-mail. Here's the first one. "I love the additions of James and Paul. I still have to use the mute button though when Carlson and Novak come on. Great show last night, at least the good half that I heard." Tracy Schwartz, McLean, Virginia. Tracy, just watch with your right eye covered. It will make a lot more sense.

CARLSON: Paul, this is clearly one of our many sufferers, suffering from dyslexia. She has put the names in exactly the wrong positions.

OK, next, oh, I like this one. From Ron Beaugh, Lake Charles, Louisiana writes, "Paul Begala's view of the 2000 election makes all future statements from him laughably suspect. Perhaps he's intended to be the comic relief?" Well if you think that's funny, Ron Beaugh of Lake Charles, Louisiana, you ought to listen to Paul Begala talk about his former boss, Bill Clinton and what a great guy he was.

BEGALA: Oh, I'm sure Ron loves him as well. Ron, thank you for that lovely missive. Here's one from a Nedra Smith. "The only thing missing from your opening was the feather boas. You could the WWF a run for its money." Nedra Smith, Lake Alfred, FL. Where is Jesse Ventura when we need him?

CARLSON: You know what? I'm going to turn down the opportunity to comment on the feather boas and move on right into one from Mark Dennis from Panama City, Florida who writes, "The most fun without a prophylactic." But you know what?

BEGALA: Father McGill is going to thank you for that one.

BEGALA: Nothing about prophylactics is fun. You've four children. You know what I'm talking about.

BEGALA: How about questions or comments from the audience? Yes, sir, tell us your name and where you're from?

JAVAD KAZALI (ph): My is Javad Kazali and I'm from St. Louis, Missouri. And my question is, do we believe that homeland security director Ridge should be allowed to testify before the Congress?

BEGALA: We asked Tom Daschle that on this set last night. He said he was willing to subpoena him. And if he violates the subpoena, the next step is contempt of Congress. The guy's spending \$38 billion of our money. We ought to know where the hell he's spending it.

CARLSON: Yes, he ought to go to prison if he doesn't get up there and participate in a political circus, choreographed by Congress. Absolutely. Don't you think, Paul? He ought to go to jail.

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BEGALA: He should be accountable.

CARLSON: I mean, it's absolutely ridiculous.

BEGALA: Congress pays the bills.

CARLSON: Well, look, just answer your question in an honest way. And this may blow your mind, but he speaks to members of Congress all the time. If you want to speak to Tom Ridge and you're a member of Congress, you call him up and you come over and he briefs you. Certainly not before television cameras. That's the distinction.

BEGALA: But if you give \$1200 bucks, you get a private briefing from the House of Republicans.

CARLSON: No, that's the last administration.

BEGALA: Thank you very much for that. That's the new policy?

CARLSON: What's your name?

MO KHYBER (ph): Mo Khyber from Berkeley Springs, West Virginia. When a Palestinian straps a bomb around his waist, and blows up innocence, that Palestinian is justifiably labeled a terrorist. But when Sharon kills innocent Palestinians, hundreds of children, you guys don't call Sharon a terrorist. Will you today call him a terrorist. And if not, why not?

CARLSON: I'll tell you why not. No, I won't call him a terrorist. And the difference is, I mean, if evidence ever arises that Sharon or people who work from him on his orders intentionally killed civilians, I think it'd be fair to call him a terrorist. That evidence has never surfaced, as you're fully aware, and that's the distinction. One of intent. People who go out to kill civilians are terrorists. Those who don't are not.

KHYBER: Civilians are killed as a result of that military incursion. He's not a terrorist?

BEGALA: The reason that we use the phrase "collateral damage," as to when the United States has used military activities, when we are at war, it is one of the tragedies of wars that sometimes innocent dies. But that is not the purpose and intent of the United States, or of Israel in this case.

When a Palestinian terrorist straps bombs to his body, walks into a pizzeria, filled with teenagers, he is not going after a military target. He is a terrorist. And there's an enormous distinction. There's a distinction between right and wrong.

KHYBER: And Sharon is a terrorist when he kills 1200 Palestinians, many of them innocent. And you guys are immoral to call it collateral damage.

CARLSON: These are military incursions. See, I guess that's the distinction right there. A civilized nation grieves when its soldiers accidentally, unintentionally kill civilians. A terrorist celebrates when he or his companions intentionally kill them. You don't see the difference of intent that makes all the difference?

KHYBER: Most commentators like Will and Krautheimer, when they write their idiotic columns, they grieve over Israeli deaths. They never once grieve over Palestinian deaths.

CARLSON: We're going to have them on as guests. And you can ask them directly.

BEGALA: Yes, sir. Will and Krautheimer are probably not going to be coming on any time soon. So I don't want to be hammering them. But no, Tucker, I think this is a rare area. And I promise it will never happen again. But we are in agreement because it is about intent and a decent nation does not target innocents.

CARLSON: Well, I hope it never does happen, because the moment you start speaking in complete, reasonable, non-fervid sentences, Paul, Begala, is the minute I start to get chills up and down the back of my spine. But there's something wrong with me.

BEGALA: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) Rodney King moment here, when we just, you know, all just talk.

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CARLSON: Not a chance. We cannot all just get along on this show. And that's one of the beauties of it.

BEGALA: Thank goodness for that. From the left, I am Paul Begala. Good-night from CROSSFIRE.

CARLSON: And from the right, I'm Tucker Carlson. Join us again tomorrow night for more CROSSFIRE. We'll see you then. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT www.fdch.com

LOAD-DATE: July 11, 2003

Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief Palestinian representative to the US, discusses the Palestinian viewpoint of the violence in the Middle East NBC News Transcripts April 1, 2002 Monday



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NBC News Transcripts

SHOW: Today (7:00 AM ET) - NBC

April 1, 2002 Monday

LENGTH: 593 words

HEADLINE: Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief Palestinian representative to the US, discusses the Palestinian viewpoint of the violence in the Middle East

ANCHORS: KATIE COURIC; ANN CURRY

BODY:

KATIE COURIC, co-host:

Hassan Abdel Rahman is the chief Palestinian representative to the United States.

Mr. Rahman, good morning to you.

Mr. HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN (Chief Palestinian Representative to the United States): Good morning, Katie.

COURIC: In his address to the nation on Sunday, Ariel Sharon said that, quote, "Terrorism is being directed, promoted, initiated by one person, Yasser Arafat. And that," quote, "Yasser Arafat is the head of a coalition of terrorism." What is Yasser Arafat doing, or what could he do to end the violence in the region?

Mr. RAHMAN: First, let me say this, I agree that terrorism is the root cause of all the problems that we face with the Israelis, but from our point of view the terrorism is the continued illegal military occupation of Israel that has lasted over 35 years, robbing the Palestinians of their dignity, of their freedom, of their land. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed at the hands of the Israelis. Hundreds of thousands of acres of land stolen from the Palestinians to build exclusive settlements for Taliban Jews brought from New York and other places to the Palestinian territories. The humiliation that the Palestinians undergo on a daily basis is driving many Palestinians to desperation and violence.

COURIC: Let's talk about this late...

Mr. RAHMAN: Therefore...

COURIC: Mr. Rahman, let me just interrupt for a second and ask you about this latest wave of violence. President Bush has asked Yasser Arafat to condemn these suicide bombings in Arabic. Why won't he do that?

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, I believe if President Bush and the rest of the world were listening to President Arafat when he made his speech to the summit in Beirut last week, they would see clearly that Yasser Arafat in Arabic directly called on the Palestinians and on the Israelis to avoid harming civilians. He said that, 'We are opposed, we condemn all kinds of violence.' But, Katie, I want to remind you, there were

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1,400 Palestinians killed by the Israeli army, 450 of them are children under the age of 15, eight percent are women, many of those children were on their ways to school, killed by the Israelis.

Katie, the problem here is the occupation, and I believe that the war that Mr. Sharon is waging, he's waging it against the Palestinian people. We all know that Mr. Sharon opposed the Ulster peace process. He's against it. He is not trying to achieve security for Israel, because the security for Israel cannot be achieved through killing more Palestinians and intimidating Palestinians and brutalizing Palestinians.

You know, there are 30,000 soldiers in Ramallah alone, where there are only 25,000 people. You see, there's one soldier and a half for every citizen today in the city of Ramallah. You know, the Israeli soldiers are looting the houses. They are stealing property, they are stealing jewelry stores, they are stealing money from the people. They are beating up these citizens, people, fathers, mothers in front of their children. They are driving the Palestinian society into violence.

COURIC: Mr. Rahman.

Mr. RAHMAN: And we blame them for that.

COURIC: Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief Palestinian representative to the United States. Mr. Rahman, again, thank you for joining us as well.

Mr. RAHMAN: Thank you.

COURIC: It is 7:15. Now let's get the rest of the morning's news from Ann Curry over at the newsdesk.

Ann, good morning.

ANN CURRY, anchor:

Good morning. Welcome back, Katie. Good morning, Matt.

Good morning, everybody.

LOAD-DATE: April 1, 2002

SHOW: NBC 7/39 Today

April 1, 2002, Monday AM PT

NETWORK: KNSD-TV

MEDIUM: Television

TYPE: Television

LENGTH: 106 words

BODY:

START: 32.12

Bush. President

Visual - Bush has opted to stay out of the Middle East turmoil but has voiced his opinion. He spent Easter weekend at his Texas ranch.

Visual - Bush in Washington DC Last Night.

Visual - Middle East and People. Palestinians are asking how a deal can be worked out when Israelis have their leader cornered.

Visual - Yasser Arafate(?).

Interview - **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Palestinian Representative to US says that it is easier for President Bush to tell Sharon to stop this madness. Bush called 5 world leaders on the matter and has yet to speak to Palestinian leader or Ariel Sharon.

END: 33.03

SEGMENT-ID: 39

PROGRAM-ID: knsd05000401

LOAD-DATE: June 7, 2002

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CNN

SHOW: CNN SUNDAY MORNING 07:00

March 31, 2002 Sunday

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HEADLINE: Interview with Alon Pinkas, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**

GUESTS: Alon Pinkas, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**

BYLINE: Miles O'Brien, Kyra Phillips

HIGHLIGHT:

Alon Pinkas and **Hasan Abdel Rahman** discuss the violence in the Middle East.

BODY:

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MILES O'BRIEN, CNN ANCHOR: As we continue our coverage of this crisis in the Middle East and as it continues to escalate, we turn our attention now to someone who is familiar with the diplomatic channels in all of this. Alon Pinkas is the Consul General of Israel. He joins us from New York. Mr. Pinkas, good to have you with us.

ALON PINKAS, ISRAELI CONSUL GENERAL: Good morning Miles.

O'BRIEN: First of all just, if you'll just give us your general reaction to what we've been witnessing this morning.

PINKAS: What you've been witnessing this morning is a testament to what we've been talking about the last several weeks and several months. And it should explain -- I think it's almost self-explanatory, why we have initiated this military operation. You have this little note on the bottom of the screen saying four suicide bombs in five days. We've counted 62 since Camp David, since we were supposedly on the verge of a comprehensive peace agreement a year ago.

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and a half ago.

There have been over 60 suicide bombers. Some have been initiated by the Hamas and the Islamic jihad, but some have been initiated by organizations and armed militias subordinate directly to Arafat, and what you saw, this carnage that you see in Haifa, there was another attack in Efrat, in Samaria (ph), should illustrate to you, in no unequivocal terms, why we went into Ramallah, why we will not stop until we do the utmost in terms of uprooting or dismantling this infrastructure.

O'BRIEN: But Mr. Pinkas, throughout the morning, we've been entertaining e-mails from our viewers, and one of the themes that comes up time and again -- I don't have one just isolated just this moment, but the general theme is that we tend to focus on the suicide bombings and the casualties to Israelis, at the expense of the Palestinian casualties at the hands of the Israeli forces. You know, you tallied up 62 suicide bombings. What about the casualties inflicted by the Israelis? And to what extent is that fomenting additional suicide bombings?

PINKAS: Let me follow this logic, Miles. You want to tell me that whatever we were doing in the West Bank or Gaza, in the last 18 months, justifies suicide bombings, even from a Palestinian point of view? Then that logic is alien to me. Everything that we are doing in the West Bank and Gaza is in order to prevent terror attacks, in order to prevent these kind of homicidal maniacs from carrying out their act.

We're facing a culture, a political culture, a general culture that looks at these homicidal maniacs as some kind of role models. Now, we have sought to end this -- or to untie this Gordian knot at Camp David. The Palestinians rejected it. We're talking about a totally bankrupt leadership that has brought nothing but misery and tragedy that is inciting these kind of suicide attacks.

Just one more sentence, if I may. We are not shooting civilians. We are not targeting children in pizza parlors. We are not blowing ourselves up in hospitals, in medical stations, in pizza parlors, in cafes, in weddings, or in holiday meals.

O'BRIEN: The Israeli statement is that Yasser Arafat has the ability to control these radicals, these people who will strap explosives onto them and go and kill innocents. But to the extent that he might have ever had this control, it perhaps has now stripped in the sense that he is holed up in -- not even a compound any more, just two rooms, with limited communication. How can it be expected for Arafat to do anything to stop this sort of violence that we've been witnessing this morning?

PINKAS: Well, Miles, if he has control and decided not to use it, meaning that he had the ability, but lacked the will, he's certainly not a political partner. If he does not have the power, then he's certainly not a political partner. So any way you look at it, we have a problem with this man and this corrupt regime that he has established.

Now, he could still stand up right now -- he has access to television, as you saw a few moments ago, he has access to his cell phone, as you saw a few moments ago, and you've been running this for the last few days. He could stand up and

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say something very clear, drop your weapons, cease fire, I will not tolerate, I will not accept any more -- any more terror attacks. I call upon all the Palestinians to cease fire.

Believe us, Miles, that the minute he says that we will cease our fire. This is not something that I am asking him to do. This is something that the United States of America has been asking him to do, that the European Union has been asking him to do, that the secretary general of the United Nations has been asking him to do. But he has failed to live by his commitments, never delivered on his promises, reneged on any and every written document that his name is signed on.

O'BRIEN: Is it the Israeli position now that events have overtaken Arafat and that he is not really relevant, and to the extent that we're focusing on him. We are sort of marching towards a red herring somewhat?

PINKAS: I think there's a lot of truth in that -- in that assessment. I think that he's outlived his usefulness politically. I don't see anyone in Israel, and that cuts through left, right, pro- peace process, those who have reservations about the peace process the way we knew it, I don't think that anyone seriously trusts Arafat as a viable and credible partner any longer.

O'BRIEN: All right.

PINKAS: The fact you're focusing on him is because this is the nature of your business and it's good footage. I would concentrate on the victims of the -- of those suicide or homicide bombers that have done what they have done because they got their marching orders from this man and his insightful and hateful speeches.

O'BRIEN: All right, but if you -- accepting all that premise, where does that leave Israel? There really is no one to negotiate with. Negotiations maybe that's too much of a euphemism anyway at this juncture. But nevertheless, if the goal ultimately is some kind of peace, where do you go? Who do you talk to?

PINKAS: We hopefully will talk to the second tier of the Palestinian leadership at some point. I will not rule out the possibility that through mediation, American, international, we will end up even discussing some form of a cease-fire with Arafat himself, although that seems to be such a distant and remote possibility right now. As I said, no one seems to take him seriously as a political interlocker. We nevertheless want a political process to be restored. We want a political process to be resumed. We have no illusions that this is going to be solved militarily. We're doing what we have to do for self-defense.

Having said all that, it doesn't mean that we're not in the business of looking for partners, looking for some kind of political resolution. I don't even want to call it a peace process because I think that would be too ambitious and just inaccurate a term. But we are looking, we will never stop searching, for some kind of a partner, but without routing out the terrorists, without dismantling their infrastructure, without demolishing the -- this entire hot bed of terrorism. I can't see a meaningful and viable political process resuming in the upcoming weeks or months.

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O'BRIEN: Alon Pinkas is Israel's Consul General joining us from New York. Thank you very much for your viewpoints. We appreciate it, sir.

PINKAS: Thank you Miles.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PHILLIPS: All right, we just heard from the Israeli Consul General Alon Pinkas. Miles interviewed him with the Israeli side. Of course, we need to bring balance to what's been happening in the Middle East all this morning.

Hasan Abdel Rahman is in D.C. He's the Palestinian representative to the United States. I know you listened to Mr. Pinkas, sir, and feel free to respond to what the consul general had to say.

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP TO THE U.S.: Yes, first of all, I mean it seems that Mr. Pinkas believes that if he repeats his lies often, they become truth, and they are not. First of all, let me say this, the original sin on this Easter holiday is the Israeli occupation that lasted for 35 years. It is illegal, it is immoral occupation of the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian territories.

In those 35 years, Israel brutalized the Palestinian people, sucked life out of them, and made their life a misery. That's what created hostility towards Israel. We had hoped that through the political process that we initiated in Oslo, will end this illegal, immoral occupation of our territory and our people.

But what the Israelis done that within seven years of peace negotiations, they have brought in 100 more Jewish Taliban settlers into the Palestinian territories and took over land that is Palestinian land. And the Israeli military brutalization of the Palestinians on checkpoints, on harassment, beating up people, humiliating people, continued. And that's why the secretary-general of the United Nations in his letter the other day to Mr. Sharon told him, please, Mr. Sharon, if you want the violence to end, and if you want the Palestinians to respond to you, stop your brutalization of the Palestinians.

You cannot have 3.5 million Palestinians under siege, 60 of their labor forces unemployed. They cannot move from one place to the other, and not react. I believe that what turns Palestinians to violence is this prolonged military brutal occupation, and Mr. Sharon does not believe in peace. He voted against Oslo, and he believes that he has to beat up the Palestinians. Mr. Sharon did not make a secret of his plan to inflict as much damage on the Palestinians as he can.

And now, in the city of Ramallah, which is a Christian city on an Easter day, you have 30,000 Israeli soldiers in a city of over 25,000 people, and the same thing is in Bethlehem and (UNINTELLIGIBLE), two other Christian Palestinian cities. So what we have here is a brutalization of the Palestinians, and I blame Israel for turning our children into suicide bombers because they have sucked hope out of their lives and made them into a people who do not distinguish between life and death.

We are pained. We ache. I, myself is horrified when I see a Palestinian committing suicide and killing others. We don't like it. Because we, the

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Palestinian people, notwithstanding what Mr. Pinkas said about us, that we are a culture of violence. We pride ourselves of being the society that produced more engineers, more doctors, more poets, more artists in the Middle East as a whole, including, probably in Israel. So this racist description of our culture is absolutely unacceptable and uncalled for.

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: And this kind of behavior of Israel does not lead us to peace. Yes?

PHILLIPS: Five suicide bombings in five days. You have an Israeli operation that is becoming more intense also. Are things coming to a head here?

RAHMAN: Well, you know, believe me, we are opposed to those suicide bombers. As I said, who wants to see a young man or a young woman killing himself and killing some civilians in the process -- no one. But we have to understand the climate, not to justify it, but the climate and the environment that is created by Israel -- the climate of humiliation, the climate of hopelessness, of starvation.

Those are kids who have no hope, because Israel made a ceiling on their aspiration and their hopes.

And therefore, we want to live side by side with Israel. We want to make peace with Israel. But we cannot make peace with Israel when Israeli tanks are bulldozing our streets and our homes, and when the Israeli army is engaged in mafia style execution of our people.

Mr. Pinkus said that we do not target children. There are 400 ...

PHILLIPS: Mr. Pinkas also said just moments ago that Israel is more than happy to call for a cease-fire if Yasser Arafat stands up and does the same.

RAHMAN: We already, we cooperated. But the, but I think this statement is misleading.

Cease-fire while the Israeli army stays in the territories? Or cease-fire that will lead to withdrawal of the Israeli tanks?

Mr. Pinkas wants to have a cease-fire that maintains the status quo, have the Israeli army and the Jewish settlers in the Palestinian territories.

We want a cease-fire that leads to Israeli end of its illegal, immoral and brutal occupation of us.

We will accept it now. And that's what was proposed by Prince Abdullah and the whole Arab League in Beirut last week.

We propose Israeli end of its occupation of Arab territories, and whole Arab world, the whole Arab world, 22 states will sign normal peace with Israel.

That is the challenge.

I wanted Mr. Pinkas to say, yes, we accept this. But he does not say,

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cease-fire and we will continue to occupy the Palestinian territories and build exclusive Jewish settlements for the most extreme elements of the Israeli societies, who are really Jewish Taliban.

PHILLIPS: So, as you can imagine, Mr. Rahman, we've been receiving numerous e-mails, and we've fielded them to a number of ...

RAHMAN: Yes.

PHILLIPS: ... folks for the Jewish perspective. We would -- or the Israeli perspective, excuse me.

We would like to -- we have a couple here that we'd like to read to you.

This one comes from Tom Davidson in Georgia.

"I do not get it. An insane person randomly picks out your house from all the ones on your street, walks in, stops in the middle of your living room when your children are watching TV and detonates a bomb that kills them all. What would you do?"

RAHMAN: Well, definitely we are opposed to that. But have he asked himself, what makes a young man do that? Why it happened, it is happening today? Why it did not happen before?

Why it happens since Mr. Sharon became a prime minister, and declared that the only way to deal with the Palestinians is through military violence.

When you have 435 little Palestinian killed -- children killed by Israel, when you have 1,400 Palestinians killed, when you have thousands and thousands of Palestinians detained -- you saw them on television yesterday, stripped naked in front of their children, beaten up, herded like cattle in buses and taken to

Jewish settlements, humiliated.

When you see the president of the Palestinian people, who was elected by them, humiliated in the way he is today, wouldn't you be angry?

If you had a tank of a foreign army invading your town and your city, wouldn't you be angry?

PHILLIPS: Another e-mail ...

RAHMAN: Mr. Davidson, he should ask himself that question. Instead of just condemning the Palestinians, he should ask Mr. Sharon, for the sake of the Jewish people and the Israel people and the Palestinian people, to pull out so we can have equality between the two people

And to live peace, because Israeli security is not going to be at the expense of the Palestinian security, and vice versa.

We believe that Israeli tanks will not bring security for Israel. And the events of the last two days prove that.

What -- the only way to have security is to have justice.

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PHILLIPS: Mr. Rahman, ...

RAHMAN: Between the two people.

PHILLIPS: Palestinian representative to the United States, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, from Washington, D.C., we thank you, sir.

RAHMAN: Thank you very much. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT www.fdch.com

LOAD-DATE: July 11, 2003

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NBC News Transcripts

SHOW: NBC Nightly News (6:30 PM ET) - NBC

March 31, 2002 Sunday

LENGTH: 355 words

HEADLINE: President George W. Bush condemns latest suicide bombings in Israel

ANCHORS: JOHN SEIGENTHALER

REPORTERS: NORAH O'DONNELL

BODY:

JOHN SEIGENTHALER, anchor:

President Bush said today that the latest suicide bombings in Israel would not hinder his effort to bring peace to the Middle East. But some US senators said the president should do more. NBC's Norah O'Donnell reports.

NORAH O'DONNELL reporting:

Today the president condemned the latest suicide bombings as an act of terrorism as he headed back to the White House after an Easter weekend in Crawford, Texas, with his family. But the escalating violence has dealt a crushing blow to Bush's diplomacy and increased criticism that Bush has been aloof, his foreign policy quixotic at best.

Mr. WILLIAM COHEN (NBC News World Affairs Analyst): Well, I believe that the United States is the only country that can play a positive role in helping to bring about a cease-fire.

O'DONNELL: But what more can the president do?

Senator JOSEPH BIDEN (Chairman, Foreign Relations Committee): I think there needs to be something dramatic done. And that means the president has to step up his involvement.

O'DONNELL: Bush yesterday phoned leaders of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, but did not call either Ariel...

(Announcements)

O'DONNELL: ...who now faces a difficult position: how will he get Arafat, cornered in his compound, to cut a deal?

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (Chief PLO Representative): Do you think that Yasser Arafat is the hostage and the prisoner, will tell his people not to defend themselves? Isn't it easier for President Bush to tell Sharon to stop this

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madness?

O'DONNELL: With the two sides so far apart, Bush's only option may be through Arab leaders, like Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah, to convince Arafat to call for a cease-fire and reach a political settlement.

Mr. COHEN: The only glimmer of hope that I see is the Saudi initiative saying that all of the Arab countries are not prepared to support the notion and the idea that Israel is a Jewish state.

O'DONNELL: President Bush now faces a difficult decision: whether to switch course and spend some of his own political capital to steer the two sides toward peace. Norah O'Donnell, NBC News, the White House.

LOAD-DATE: April 1, 2002

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SHOW: This Week

March 31, 2002, Sunday PM ET

NETWORK: ABC Network Programming

MEDIUM: Television

TYPE: Network

LENGTH: 222 words

BODY:

START: 06.33

Discussion. To discuss the war on terror,

Studio Interview - Ra'Anan Gissin, Spokesman for Israeli PM Ariel Sharon, says they are a nation at war and they intend to twin the war. Arafat is not the main problem, the problem is the victims of his policy. They are a nation speaking peace and the Prime Minister is committed to that.

Studio Interview - **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Chief PLO Rep. to the US, says Bush has called Sharon and has asked him to stop the madness of killing and inflicting more pain on his people. Only through a political process will the end the illegal Israeli operation come.

Studio Interview - Abdel Al Jubeir, Advisor to Abdullah, says the kingdom of Saudi Arabia has offered a peace offering. It involves a fair and final settlement of the conflict and the only question is, is if the other side will give yes for an answer.

Studio Interview - Sandy Berge, Clinton National Security Advisor, says Israel will not be driven away by force and they know that. Military action by itself will not bring a solution.

Studio Interview - Zbigniew Brzezinsky, Carter National Security Advisor, says laying out a concept of peace indication to both sides in what view to the US what is fair to the settlement would move the process forward. Nor side can reach peace on their own.

END: 21.05

SEGMENT-ID: 4

PROGRAM-ID: abc11300331

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2002

Two more suicide attacks in Israel; Yasser Arafat is defiant as Israelis invade Ramallah; President George W. Bush sides with with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; Sharon spokesman Ra'anan Gi



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ABC News

SHOW: This Week (10:30 AM ET) - ABC

March 31, 2002 Sunday

TYPE: Profile

LENGTH: 8467 words

HEADLINE: Two more suicide attacks in Israel; Yasser Arafat is defiant as Israelis invade Ramallah; President George W. Bush sides with with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; Sharon spokesman Ra'anan Gissin discusses what is needed for peace in Middle East; Hassan Abdel Rahman, spokesman for PLO to US, discusses what is Arabia Crown Prince Abdullah discusses what is needed for peace in Middle East; former national security advisors Sandy Berger and Zbigniew Brzezinski discuss what American should do to achieve peace in Mideast; Former Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder and federal death penalty research counsel David Bruck discuss whether Zaccarias Moussaoui should receive death penalty if proven guilty; Review of week's events; Chicago Cubs are overdue for victory

ANCHORS: SAM DONALDSON; COKIE ROBERTS

REPORTERS: DEAN REYNOLDS; DAN HARRIS; TERRY MORAN; GEORGE WILL; GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS; JOHN COCHRAN

BODY:

Announcer: From ABC News in Washington, THIS WEEK with Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts.

SAM DONALDSON, co-host:

This Easter morning, bloodshed and chaos in the Middle East. Another suicide bombing, this one in Haifa. Ramallah still under siege, with Yasser Arafat trapped in his compound. President Bush points the finger.

President GEORGE W. BUSH: If people want peace in the region there has got to be a united effort against terror. And I do believe Mr. Arafat can do more.

DONALDSON: What will happen next? We'll get the latest from key advisers to both sides.

COKIE ROBERTS, co-host:

Plus, what should the US do? And, what does the instability in the region mean for the global war on terror? We'll speak with two former national security advisers, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Samuel Berger.

DONALDSON: Also at week, AT ISSUE. Is the death penalty the right punishment for the first alleged conspirator in the September 11th attacks? President Clinton's deputy attorney general, Eric Holder, says yes. And we'll also hear from lawyer David Bruck, an opponent of the death penalty, who's worked with the defense team handling this case.

Two more suicide attacks in Israel; Yasser Arafat is defiant as Israelis invade Ramallah; President George W. Bush sides with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; Sharon spokesman Ra'anan Gi

Announcer: That's THIS WEEK, featuring George Will and George Stephanopoulos. Now Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts.

ROBERTS: Welcome to our program. This Easter Sunday morning in the Holy Land is not a joyous one, as there's more violence in the region. Sam:

DONALDSON: Cokie, there've been more suicide bombings in Israel today, including one at a Haifa restaurant that left many dead, while Yasser Arafat remains besieged in Ramallah, and the Bush administration continues an internal debate over how deeply the United States should get involved. We have three reports, beginning with ABC's Dean Reynolds in Jerusalem. Dean:

DEAN REYNOLDS reporting:

Sam, there have been two suicide attacks so far today, the first in the Israeli port city of Haifa, and the second in the West Bank Jewish settlement of Efrat, and they come just as the Israelis are debating what more they can do to contain this violence.

(VO) The attack on a Haifa restaurant was by far the worst. At least 15 are dead, and it is certain to strengthen the hand of those in the Israeli government who are advocating a much tougher line. Israel has announced the call-up of 20,000 reservists for duty in the West Bank and Gaza. The move will reportedly cost the Israeli economy \$100 million a month. But more important, it's a clear sign the military offensive will be a long one and that it will most probably be expanded.

Israeli forces entered the Bethlehem area over the weekend, but the open-ended aspect of the Israeli action has reawakened fears that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is acting impulsively instead of strategically. Referring to Sharon's ill-fated military adventure in Lebanon 20 years ago, one prominent Israeli columnist wrote today that Sharon has always known how to begin things, but has seldom known how to end them. He reportedly favors expelling Arafat now, but so far has relented in the face of strong opposition from the Israeli military and intelligence agencies.

(OC) And as the Israeli Cabinet debates its next move, the Israeli public is absorbing the news of these two attacks coming not days but hours apart.

And now to my colleague in Ramallah, Dan Harris. Dan:

DAN HARRIS reporting:

Dean, thank you.

Just a short time ago, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat spoke to reporters at his compound under siege. He is, according to CNN, still defiant, still saying he doesn't care whether he lives or dies, and still saying that hi--hi--his fate is less important than the fate of the Palestinian people.

At the compound today, there was an exchange of fire between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The Israelis are saying they were simply returning fire, after the pilis--Palestinians fired on them. The Palestinians say the Israelis are still threatening to storm the offices occupied by Arafat and his top aide, that they're still punching into new areas of the compound, and that there are several injured Palestinians who are being denied access to medical care. The Israelis deny that they are trying to occupy the offices that Arafat is in right now. They say they're simply trying to isolate him.

Elsewhere in Ramallah, the Israeli Army has been moving door to door in certain neighborhoods, arresting suspected militants. The army is also imposing a very strict curfew 24 hours a day. In fact, in one neighborhood where--where we were earlier in the day, an Israeli armored vehicle was announcing to residents via loud speaker that if they leave their home they're in danger of being killed.

That's the latest from Ramallah on day three of this siege. We move now to Washington and my colleague, Terry Moran.

TERRY MORAN reporting:

Thanks, Dan.

Two more suicide attacks in Israel; Yasser Arafat is defiant as Israelis invade Ramallah; President George W. Bush sides with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; Sharon spokesman Ra'anan Gissin

President Bush is spending his Easter Sunday morning at his ranch in Crawford, Texas. His administration's response to this latest upsurge in violence has been hesitant, confused and contradictory.

Mr. Bush himself this week has remained mostly aloof from day-to-day management of the crisis, unwilling to risk his personal political capital in such an uncertain endeavor. But yesterday, he did step up his public and private efforts. He called the leaders of Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the European Union and the United Nations and, in what were mostly short, perfunctory phone calls, assured them that the United States' efforts to achieve a cease-fire in the region would continue through its envoy, General Anthony Zinni.

But then, in unscheduled and unexpected remarks to reporters, the president may have undermined General Zinni's mission by coming down fore square on the side of Israeli Prime Minister Is--Ariel Sharon, essentially endorsing his tough tactics, saying he understands Israel's need to defend itself in this matter. And he spoke of Yasser Arafat, the besieged Palestinian leader, with scorn, essentially saying that he is to blame for the violence and calling on him once again to do more to stop it.

Mr. Bush's comments took some of his foreign policy advisers by surprise, they dismayed Arab leaders, and they, in many ways, directly contradicted a vote the United States had cast in the UN Security Council in the wee hours of Saturday morning in favor of a resolution that was seen as very tough on Israel, calling on Israel to withdraw its troops. The administration is now engaged in feverish diplomacy to get ahold of this situation. But its mixed messages and the president's personal endorsement of Prime Minister Sharon's tough tactics raises a question, if the United States can continue to play its traditional role of honest broker in this conflict--a role that reached its apex under President Clinton, and that observers say there is no one else in the world who can assume it. Cokie:

ROBERTS: Thank you, Terry.

Now we want to hear from some of the spokesmen in the region. Ra'anan Gissin is the spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. He's in Jerusalem.

Mr. Gissin, we heard in Dean Reynolds' report, and we have other reports here this morning, that--that Prime Minister Sharon did want to expel Yasser Arafat from Ramallah, from the region, and the cabinet, the military, the intelligence officers stopped him from doing that. Has he changed his mind?

Mr. RA'ANAN GISSIN (Spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon): Well, good afternoon, Cokie.

ROBERTS: I can't hear him.

Mr. GISSIN: I'd just like to make it very clear--make it very clear...

ROBERTS: I can't hear him.

Mr. GISSIN: ...that Israel is a peace-seeking nation. It is also a nation at war right now. And we intend to win that war. Yasser Arafat is not the main problem. The main problem are the victims of his policy, which lies strewn in his street.

DONALDSON: Alice...

Mr. GISSIN: You can see them in Haifa today, 15 dead already. The decision of the government as the prime minister has endorsed it...

ROBERTS: OK. I've got it.

Mr. GISSIN: ...right now, is to make certain--to make certain that Arafat is isolated, that he's neutralized from causing further damage, and that's where it stays right now.

ROBERTS: The president yesterday, as--as you heard in Terry Moran's report, did support Prime Minister Sharon, but he also said that it is important that Israel understand that there has to be a peaceful solution to this conflict, that this cannot be all-out war. Are you now saying that this is all-out war?

Two more suicide attacks in Israel; Yasser Arafat is defiant as Israelis invade Ramallah; President George W. Bush sides with with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; Sharon spokesman Ra'anana Givon

Mr. GISSIN: I'm saying it's all-out war and we are a bleeding nation. But we are also a nation seeking peace. And the prime minister has stated time and again that he is committed to peace. And we have spared no effort to try and reach a cease-fire. We are the only side that assisted, really, General Zinni. Yasser Arafat can roll his eyes to the heaven, but what he did was try to scuttle, to torpedo this initiative, and that's why we find ourselves where we are today.

ROBERTS: And--and, quickly, is there anything General Zinni can do now?

Mr. GISSIN: Well, look, we continue to welcome General Zinni here and will give him any kind of assistance, any kind of support possible. But we also insist--insisted--and we made it very clear, both to President Bush, as well as to other officials in the administration--Israel will maintain its right to defend itself in the face of this unmitigated violence. If we don't put a stop to this suicide bombing right here and now, this is going to spread and become a worldwide phenomenon.

ROBERTS: OK.

Mr. GISSIN: The globalization of suicide bombing is what awaits us if we fail to stop it.

ROBERTS: Thank you very much, Mr. Gissin.

And now we turn to Hassan Abdel Rahman, chief Palestinian representative to the United States. He joins us here in Washington.

Mr. Rahman, President Bush yesterday did call on President Arafat to say, in Arabic, in no uncertain terms that he condemns these terrorists. That is something that he has been called on to do over and over again and yet has never done it.

Mr. HASSAN ABDEL RAHMAN (Chief Palestinian Liberation Organization Representative to the US): No, he has done it more than once. In fact, in his speech to the summit in Lebanon, he condemned any violence against civilians.

But I believe that President Bush should have also called Prime Minister Sharon and asked him to stop this madness, because to kill more Palestinians and inflict more pain on the Palestinians is not the way to achieve security, neither for Israel, nor for the Palestinians. Only through a political process that will end the Israeli illegal military occupation of the Palestinian territory, and allow the Palestinians to exercise their right to live in their own independent state, next to Israel, in peace with Israel that we can have peace.

ROBERTS: But without going over the past, Mr. Rahman, let me just say that in an editorial now, in a Pan Arab newspaper there is a quotation that "General Anthony Zinni has turned from being a mediator to a planner with the criminal General Ariel Sharon." Is that the view now in--in the Palestinian circles, that Zinni is not a broker?

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, Zinni is implementing a policy that--and instructions that are coming from Washington. And if we read correctly what President Bush said yesterday and what Secretary Powell said, then we will realize that this administration gave a green light to Sharon to pursue a policy that is very destructive, a military policy that is inflicting a great deal of pain on the Palestinian population: killing, destroying, imposing, a state of siege, adding to the suffering of the Palestinians that have lasted for so long and for so often.

ROBERTS: Thank you. Thank you very much for joining us this morning.

Mr. RAHMAN: Thank you.

ROBERTS: Of course, these latest actions in the Middle East come at a time when there was some hope of peace. There was a Saudi Arabian peace proposal that was adopted by the Arab summit. And now joining us is Adel Al Jubeir, the foreign policy adviser to the crown prince of Saudi Arabia. He's in Beirut today.

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The president, yesterday, called on all of the leaders in the region--and specifically came out of a reference to Saudi Arabia when he did it--saying that all--"they must join with the governments such as ours to strongly condemn and stop terrorist activities." Is Saudi Arabia ready to do that?

Mr. ADEL AL JUBEIR (Advisor to Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah): Well, yes. We always have--we had a strong policy against terrorism. But I think the important thing to remember here is that peace can only be achieved if the occupation ends, because occupation equals humiliation, it--it equals subjugation, it--it in--it involves loss of hope and it leads to people committing suicide bombings. There's a direct link there. The--the kingdom of Saudi Arabia has offered a peace initiative which was adopted by the Arab League in Beirut. This peace initiative is very dramatic, and it's very serious because it involves a fair and final settlement of the Arab/Israeli conflict. The question really is, are the Israelis ready to take yes for an answer?

ROBERTS: Well is the peace initiative still alive? The Arab League secretary general said yesterday, Israel sabotaged the peace initiative, saying, "we can't talk about it now while tanks and troops are centimeters from President Arafat's office." Is that a statement that--that--that the peace initiative is dead?

Mr. AL JUBEIR: Well, I--no, I thi--I believe what the secretary general is saying is that the Arabs have offered a peace plan that's viable, that's serious and that's sincere, and that this initiative by the Arab world has been met by aggression and violence on the part of Mr. Sharon. And that if the Israelis are serious about wanting peace and wanting normal relations with their neighbors and wanting peace treaties and wanting an end to this conflict, that they should step up to the plate and act as if they want peace. You don't respond to a peace initiative by more violence and by more--more killings.

ROBERTS: Thank you very much. Thank you for joining us this morning, Mr. Al Jubeir, from Beirut.

And Sam, now we get to the American side of this.

DONALDSON: Well, what role should the United States play in all of this? Let's ask two men who've been on the White House hot seat during times of Mideast strife: Samuel Berger, who was the national security advisor in the Clinton administration, Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security adviser in the Carter administration.

Welcome, gentlemen.

How deeply, Mr. Berger, should the United States involve itself?

Mr. SANDY BERGER (Clinton National Security Advisor): Three basic points, Sam. First of all, the Palestinians and Mr. Arafat must understand that a strategy of terror will not work. Israel will not be driven away by force. Israel will not permit it nor should they.

Second, I think most Israelis understand that military action by itself is not going to bring a solution. The operation in Ramallah did not stop the suicide bombings in Haifa and Tel Aviv yesterday.

The third, I think we now need a major effort led by the United States to change the dynamic in a fundamental way. We need to go back to the Saudis, back to the Arabs and say, 'We will make a major effort to build on the Saudi initiative, but you must deliver the Ara--the Palestinians and Mr. Arafat, not only to your vision of peace, but also to creating the conditions under which making peace is possible. That is, a genuine cease-fire.'

DONALDSON: Dr. Brzezinski, major effort. I take it you want the United States to become involved. But just saying, 'You must do this,' will that get the job done?

Dr. ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI (Carter National Security Advisor): Just saying it won't get the job done, but being committed in a strategically consistent fashion, laying out the concept of peace, indicating to both sides what, in the view of the United States, are the fair arrangements, the fair components of the of the peace settlement, would move the process forward. At this stage, neither the Israelis, nor the Palestinians, can reach peace on their own.

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There are basically three players in this game: Arafat, who's posture is characterized by evasiveness; Sharon, whose policy has been that of sustained brutality and 10-year long efforts to undermine the peace process, particularly the Oslo arrangements; and the United States, which in the last few months has had a posture of, I'm sorry to say, strategic incoherence. In that setting, it's not surprising that we're witnessing this strategy.

Three days ago, we had an outrage, the bombing, but we had a moment of historic opportunity, the proposal made by the Arabs. For the first time in 50 years, a proposal to recognize Israel and to live with it in peace. The United States has seized on the outrage, it is not exploiting the opportunity. And that is a major strategic shortcoming.

DONALDSON: The president clearly--talk about tilting--has tilted far toward the Israeli position here. Has that been helpful? Is that the right thing to do?

Mr. BERGER: I--I think it is important to make clear that a strategy of terror will not work. But we have to put some political capital into this game, Sam.

DONALDSON: Well, what do we do?

Mr. BERGER: We have to go to the Saudis, go to the Arabs at this point, at a high level, and say, 'We will build on the initiative you have undertaken in Beirut, but you have to help us bring Arafat to a cease-fire.'

DONALDSON: Do--do we put pressure? And I mean by pressure, not just say, 'You have to do this,' but 'If you don't, we're going to,' what? Financially withdraw support? What kind of pressure?

Mr. BERGER: I think the very act of American engagement here is extraordinarily important. We have to put some political chips on the table. And every American president since Nixon has understood this. It was Kissinger who bought an end to the conflict in '73. It was President Carter and Secretary Vance and Zbig at Camp David One, it was George Shultz in '82, it was Clinton and Christopher with the Syrian/Israeli problem in '96, Clinton and Christopher at Camp David Two. We have to--Vice President Cheney said it very clearly last week. Nothing is going to happen without us. We have to get engaged in this, not in--simply admonishments and condemnations, but by putting some real effort here.

DONALDSON: OK. Real effort, pressure. Pressure. What do we--how do we pressure both both sides, all the parties in this case? Or...

Dr. BRZEZINSKI: Well, first, we have to take stock of what is happening now. There's a crisis going on, we may have Arafat killed in the near future, and then people will say it was an accident.

DONALDSON: Do you think that Prime Minister Sharon will go that far?

Dr. BRZEZINSKI: I think, knowing what Sharon has done in the past, this cannot be excluded. And of course, the claim will be that this is an accident, a hand grenade went off or something to that effect. So this has to be brought to an end.

We also have to realize that larger stakes are involved here. If we don't stop this, our war against terrorism is going to be jeopardized. Because if our war against terrorism looks largely like a Bush/Sharon campaign against the Arabs, we're not going to have the support we need.

DONALDSON: Well, you--you suggested one option might be using US troops to go in between the parties even before the violence ends.

Dr. BRZEZINSKI: Well, I wouldn't put American troops against the will of the parties because they would become engaged in combat. But I would certainly be prepared to offer American military presence to monitor and guarantee a settlement, and we are to propose the terms of that settlement. Because neither the Israelis, neither the Palestinians will come up with terms that are compatible. We have to step into the breach, take the lead, propose a settlement. President Carter did that in Camp David and it worked.

DONALDSON: Mr.--Mr. Berger, American troops in any form, to borrow a phrase from the Johnson era, are we getting into the big muddy, hip-deep?

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Mr. BERGER: I'm skeptical, Sam, that putting American troops in this situation does anything more than make us pawns of the situation and, as Zbig suggested, turns us into combatants.

Listen, Arafat unleashed this whirlwind. And it's going to require Arafat to stop it. It's not going to be stopped, in my judgment, by Israeli military action alone.

DONALDSON: Do you think...

Mr. BERGER: But it's unlikely that Arafat's going to act under these circumstances...

DONALDSON: Do you...

Mr. BERGER: ...which is why we've got to try to change the context, change the dynamic.

DONALDSON: Do you think Prime Minister Sharon might have Arafat killed?

Mr. BERGER: I think that is--listen, Arafat is a big part of the problem here, but getting rid of Arafat doesn't solve the problem.

DONALDSON: Gentlemen, thank you very much. Samuel Berger, national security advisor in the Clinton administration, Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security advisor in the Carter administration. Thanks very much for joining us.

When we come back, more on the Middle East as George Will and George Stephanopoulos join Cokie and me for our ROUNDTABLE. Stay with us.

Announcer: THIS WEEK, with Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts, brought to you by...

(Commercial break)

DONALDSON: Well, it's time now for our ROUNDTABLE. We give our opinions. And George Will is here, as usual.

Nice to see you, George.

GEORGE WILL reporting:

Morning.

DONALDSON: And George Stephanopoulos.

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS reporting:

Sam.

DONALDSON: George, always good to see you.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Mideast and the American effort. How deeply should United States get involved and how?

STEPHANOPOULOS: Well, I think the United States probably does have to get more involved. But they--right now, we don't have a clear game plan. I do think, however, that yesterday was a clean break. President Bush was following a policy he wanted to follow yesterday when he gave that press conference in Crawford, Texas. And what it means, effectively, is he's giving Ariel Sharon a green light to go in and dismantle the Palestinian Authority, to go in and reoccupy the entire West Bank. The only think that Ariel Sharon can't do is kill or expel Arafat.

WILL: I do think the president was saying that he had to choose, either he chose to support Israel now or his own war on terrorism became incoherent. Look, three things are now clear. A terrible mistake was made 10 years ago when the Israeli government resuscitated Arafat, brought him back from Tunisia and allowed him to begin 10 years of creating the culture of death that results in the kind of terrorism we're seeing now. Second, Camp David in 2000, July 2000, made clear that the most that Israel can offer is less than Arafat will accept. Third, as I've said here before, the solution may be a short war and a high wall and we may be in the early stage of the short war.

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ROBERTS: I do think that--that the point you made about our--our own war against terrorism being incoherent is es--es--essentially where the president was going. Because you sh--listening to the language of the participants over the--the weekend, they're using the same language that President Bush used, about dismantling the terrorist infrastructure, which is exactly what the president used about going into Afghanistan and dismantling the al-Qaeda infrastructure. So, I--and I think that the--that the president is seeing a parallelism between young people going in with bombs strapped around their waist and young people guiding airplanes into buildings.

STEPHANOPOULOS: See, that's--that's the problem here...

DONALDSON: But, Cokie--excuse me just a--let me just jump in here. Our own war against terrorism requires some cooperation from the Muslim world, the Arab world. And without throwing over Israel, which I think no one is for, if we tilt so heavily toward Israel, I think we simply inflame the Arab world.

STEPHANOPOULOS: That's right. There's...

DONALDSON: And how can we then pursue a war if that's the array against us?

STEPHANOPOULOS: There's a fundamental fact: there's no end to terrorism unless there's an end to the occupation. Even if people don't want to talk about it. Listen, you talk about terrorist inter--infrastructures. If you have 17-year-old girls strapping bombs around them...

ROBERTS: That's right.

STEPHANOPOULOS: ...you're not dealing with a military force that is going to be dismantled.

ROBERTS: Well--and...

DONALDSON: And they're not going to stop. They're not going to stop.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Exactly.

ROBERTS: And not just 17-year-olds strapping bombs around them, but Yasser Arafat praising them--quite the contrary of condemning them. He--he said about the young woman who set off the bomb in Netanya, he said, "God give me martyrdom like this."

WILL: These people come...

ROBERTS: I mean, this is--this is something that is, you know, is--is praising these children.

WILL: These people come from a culture of incitement that Arafat has made it his life to produce. Now, say have to--have to say that...

ROBERTS: Well, just keeping the refugee camps is a--is a perfect example.

DONALDSON: Well, they want the land back, George.

WILL: Cokie, in--Cokie, in 1945 there were millions of refugees and displaced persons in Europe.

ROBERTS: No, I'm saying the fact that were kept...

WILL: Five years later there were none.

ROBERTS: That's--I'm agreeing with you. The same thing happened in Cyprus.

WILL: Yeah. Exactly.

DONALDSON: Well, I'm not endorsing...

ROBERTS: The fact that a child raised was in a refugee camp as a third generation...

DONALDSON: I'm not endorsing suicide bombers...

STEPHANOPOULOS: And George...

ROBERTS: ...shows you the venality of the policy.

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DONALDSON: I'm not endorsing suicide bombers, but they want the land back, two-for-two, land for peace. Israel is going to have to negotiate a settlement.

WILL: And so at Camp David, they said, 'You can have 95 percent of the West Bank back.'

ROBERTS: Right.

WILL: 'We'll divide Jerusalem, it'll be essentially the capital of the Palestinian state, we'll take 40,000 settlers off the West Bank and there'll be a limited right of return,' and Arafat said (makes negative motion with hand).

DONALDSON: Well, I think Arafat should have taken it. I think Arafat should have taken it, but now what do we do?

STEPHANOPOULOS: And it's--it's...

ROBERTS: That--that's the great tragedy.

STEPHANOPOULOS: This problem is now beyond Arafat.

DONALDSON: The past is not what's important here. What do we do now?

ROBERTS: Well, except you can't get away from the past.

WILL: The past will remain important.

STEPHANOPOULOS: What we--what we--what we do now is look at the--at the Saudi--the Saudi initiative. There was some advance.

I know you're going to disagree, George.

But there was advance in the Saudi initiative. They talked about a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem. They did not say 'right of return.' And if--what the United States has to do now is forget about all this talk about Tenet and Mitchell. When the president talked about it yesterday, it rang hollow.

ROBERTS: Right.

STEPHANOPOULOS: It sounded tinny. And go straight from Zinni's efforts to discussions about the Abdullah initiative.

DONALDSON: How about US troops?

STEPHANOPOULOS: (To George Will) Go for it.

DONALDSON: How about--how about US troops?

STEPHANOPOULOS: You're going to need it. You--in--in order to police this, you are going to need US troops between the two parties. Absolutely.

ROBERTS: You know, we've had US troops in the Sinai for years and years and years.

WILL: To enforce...

DONALDSON: Yeah, but that was after a peace treaty.

WILL: To enforce agreements already made. It has been a Palestinian objective for three decades to internationalize this conflict by getting American or some other--but preferably American--troops between the hostile camps. And we should not do it.

ROBERTS: No. I mean, look what happened in Beirut. It--it--it--it is exactly the same thing that would happen. The American troops themselves become the target. They're not peacemakers, they're not buffers, they become the target themselves.

STEPHANOPOULOS: But Beirut is revealing for Israel as well. Remember, Israel had to withdraw from Beirut after the--after the occupation, after expelling Arafat. Years later it became a quagmire for them, they had to withdraw. The same thing is going to happen on the West Bank.

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DONALDSON: Prime Minister Sharon said, of course, that he wished he had killed Arafat 20 years ago. He made a mistake.

ROBERTS: The feeling is probably mutual.

DONALDSON: Well, the question is, how near is he to the trigger here to say, 'Let's just go ahead and get this job done'?

WILL: I don't think he wants--look, the Israelis could kill Arafat any time they want. They know where he is and they can put a missile in the next room. They don't want to kill Arafat, they want to isolate and neutralize him...

STEPHANOPOULOS: Yeah, but...

WILL: ...because he is the inciter of this culture.

STEPHANOPOULOS: They want to make it Arafat's choice. Keep him in that room and force him to make a choice. Either get on--get on a helicopter or put a bullet in your own head, they don't want to pull the trigger.

ROBERTS: I--I think that's exactly right. But I--then the question again becomes, if not Arafat, who? And there's no simple answer to that question.

DONALDSON: Well, I just think it's a little incoherent to--and I'm not--I'm not advocating killing Arafat. But to say, 'We're going to go this far, right up here, but not go all the way.' That seems to me a stalemate...

ROBERTS: Well, not it's not, because...

DONALDSON: ...with Arafat on television and radio, constantly, using George words, inciting.

ROBERTS: But--but--but, look how--I mean, you talk about martyrdom and--and you talk about people being incited as you did earlier. If Arafat were killed, that would be just a green light for incitement.

STEPHANOPOULOS: But Arafat can not make the statement that President Bush wants him to make when he's alone in a room without water and electricity. It will look too weak, it'll look like he surrendering.

WILL: Just add electricity now.

STEPHANOPOULOS: You got it back now?

WILL: Yes. They're going to let him charge his cell phone, they'll go back on the Arabian CNN's correspondent in Ramallah and we'll be--we'll go on and on.

I mean, you say the Israelis are--are--are excessive, ruthless, etc. My goodness, they're delivering candles and water.

DONALDSON: I did--never used the word ruthless. But, we're going to have to end on that note. It's an intractable situation, but I think everybody is looking at it. What can we do?

And when we come back, the government says he was part of the September 11th conspiracy. Is that enough to get someone the death penalty? George Stephanopoulos examines the issue right after this.

(Commercial break)

STEPHANOPOULOS: AT ISSUE this week, should Zaccarias Moussaoui get the death penalty? Federal prosecutors argue that he wanted to be the 20th hijacker on September 11th, and according to the attorney general, that's a capital offense.

Mr. JOHN ASHCROFT (Attorney General): The United States attorneys have filed a notice of intent to seek a sentence of death. In the notice, we have alleged numerous reasons, called aggravating factors, which we believe indicate why the death penalty is appropriate.

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STEPHANOPOULOS: But Moussaoui's lawyers have entered a not guilty plea, and others say that the death penalty can't apply to someone who was already in jail when the crime was committed. Here today to debate this issue are Eric Holder, who served as deputy attorney general during the Clinton administration, and David Bruck, who works with defense counsels in federal death penalty cases like this.

Thank you for both joining us.

Mr. ERIC HOLDER (Former Deputy Attorney General): Thank you.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Mr. Holder, let me begin with you. You're personally opposed to the death penalty, but if you were still in office, you'd sign off on charges like this, right?

Mr. HOLDER: I suspect that I would. I don't know the facts as--as I would know them, obviously, if I was still in the department. But the bringing of death penalty charges against somebody who is in jail is really not all that unusual. Drug kingpins who order murders from jail are oftentimes charged with these kinds of things. The Supreme Court in 1987 said it was OK to charge somebody who was involved in a death pen--in a death, where the person was not actually the one who pulled the trigger. In that case, a couple of guys, I think, busted their father out of jail. The father then committed murder and those two individuals who helped the guy escape from jail were actually charged with murder.

STEPHANOPOULOS: But Mr...

Mr. HOLDER: So it's not unusual.

STEPHANOPOULOS: But Mr. Holder, the indictment shows no direct contact between Moussaoui and any of the 19 hijacker. Can you build a capital case on circumstantial evidence?

Mr. HOLDER: Yeah, you can build a capital case on circumstantial evidence. It will not be an easy for the government to do. The fact he did the same kinds of things the hijackers did, the fact that he got money from the same source as the hijackers I think really gets you a long way towards that goal. But I think the government's going to have to come up with some more evidence in order to meet the legal requirements and to convince a jury beyond a reasonable doubt that death should be imposed in this case.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Mr. Bruck, can the government make these charges stick?

Mr. DAVID BRUCK (Federal Death Penalty Research Counsel): Based on what the government says Mr. Moussaoui did, it's quite clear that it can't. That's not to say that it won't, but this is really a test of the rule of law. When Congress created the federal death penalty that he is charged under, it required not only that the person intend to kill, but that also he do something that directly--directly--led to the death of the victims. And the government doesn't even claim that Mr. Moussaoui did that. He was in jail three week before whatever he did ended in abject failure. He botched his part in this conspiracy.

Now, he may be a very evil man, and he may have hoped for all the horrors that occurred on September 11th, but that's not covered by the law. So what this raises is the question of whether or not the horror of September 11th is going to make us throw out the most basic principles of the rule of law...

STEPHANOPOULOS: But--but...

Mr. BRUCK: ...which is that we judge people according to what's on the books, and not what--what we wish the law said.

STEPHANOPOULOS: But I think a lot of people would say this is precisely the kind of case, because it's so horrific, where you should push the edges of the law, and that Moussaoui was clearly engaged in the same kind of pattern of activity as the other hijackers.

Mr. BRUCK: Pushing the edge of the law is one thing. Ignoring the law in order to punish someone the way we want to punish him is something quite different.

Bin Laden doesn't have the power to do very much to the United States. He cannot destroy this country. But I think--it's obvious by now that a lot of the purpose of September 11th was to try to make us do things that would destroy ourselves. And if we--in our understandable and justifiable rage against

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this man, if, in fact, he's guilty of what the government has charged him with--if we allow that to--to sacri--to cause us to sacrifice the principle of the rule of law in our own courts, then I think this bin Laden conspiracy will have been successful in a very, very disturbing way. It will have caused us to do great damage to what is most precious about this country.

President Bush said that they hate us for the rule of law and for our freedoms. Whether that's true or not, we are in a situation where we stand to damage our own freedoms as a result of the attacks on September 11th. We should not do that.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Mr. Holder, let me now turn to you. There's also been a problem here with the French. The French government has said they want a guarantee that none of the evidence they've collected will be used in a death penalty case like this. Can the US provide that guarantee? And what difference will it make in the case?

Mr. HOLDER: Well, it's clear the United States is not going to be able to tell the French government that Mr. Moussaoui will not face the death penalty. That's obviously going to have an impact on the ongoing cooperation that we're going to have with the French with regard to this particular case.

I think it's significant that the French have said that they will cooperate with us in the larger war against terrorism. And we have, to date, received information from the French that I suppose will be helpful in the--during the course of the trial. I'm not at all certain, quite frankly, that at this point we need much more from the French with regard to the Moussaoui case. I'm not at all certain that with regard to this particular case there's going to be much danger by the French position. And I don't think there is, by their own terms, going to be a problem with regard to French participation in the larger war against terrorism.

STEPHANOPOULOS: Do you agree with that, Mr. Bruck?

Mr. BRUCK: You know, we need to look down the road and take the long view. We need--we must have a worldwide coalition of people cooperating with us. The death penalty is now this country's peculiar institution. Every other democracy, every Western democracy, every single one has abolished capital punishment except us, and they're extremely uneasy and unhappy with our use of the death penalty. Countries like France will not cooperate with us indefinitely in this effort against terrorism if they know that every time we get our hands on somebody, even if the law doesn't cover it as--as it doesn't for Mr. Moussaoui, we are going to do everything we can to execute him. This--there are far more valuable objectives in this situation than executing one suicide bomber who sentenced himself to death, if the government's charges are true, when he signed up for this conspiracy.

As far as bin Laden goes, they've crossed this man off. They gave him up. He was supposed to be dead. So how on earth do we think we're advancing any effort against terrorism by--by, you know, finishing off what allegedly bin Laden decided what's going to happen to Moussaoui in the first place? We are using this to express our own emotions, and that is understandable. But it is now at cross purposes with the real objective that we should focus on, which is how to stop this from happening, and how to win this worldwide effort against terrorism.

STEPHANOPOULOS: OK. Mr. Bruck, thank you very much.

Mr. Holder, thank you.

Mr. HOLDER: Thank you.

STEPHANOPOULOS: When we come back, we'll have more thoughts from our ROUNDTABLE and George Will's commentary. Stay with us.

(Commercial break)

DONALDSON: Memorial services are being held around the world this Sunday for Britain's Queen Mother, who died yesterday at the age of 101. British and American troops joined in a tribute at a base in Afghanistan, including soldiers from the Royal Angley (ph) Regiment, a unit where the Queen Mother

Two more suicide attacks in Israel; Yasser Arafat is defiant as Israelis invade Ramallah; President George W. Bush sides with with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; Sharon spokesman Ra'anan Gi had been colonel in chief. And now, here's ABC News chief Washington correspondent John Cochran with the rest of THIS WEEK IN REVIEW.

JOHN COCHRAN reporting:

(VO) Vatican officials say Pope John is more troubled this Easter by pedophile priests than his health problems.

President Bush departed Washington after signing campaign finance reform into law.

(OC) He signed it with no pictures, no ceremony, no enthusiasm, either.

(VO) About the time the news broke, Mr. Bush was speaking at the first of two fund-raisers.

Pres. BUSH: I'm not going to lay down my arms. I'm going to participate in the rules of the system.

COCHRAN: (VO) A week of historic ups and downs for show biz. First the ups: Two African-Americans, Denzel Washington and Halle Berry, winning top honors for acting.

Ms. HALLE BERRY: This moment is so much bigger than me.

COCHRAN: (VO) Then the dows began. Dudley Moore dying at 66. He always doubted his talent. The rest of us didn't.

(Clip shown from "Arthur")

COCHRAN: (VO) Milton Berle lived to a grand age, 93, so long that young people were baffled by obituaries calling him Mr. Television. Well, young folks, this was an entertainer so funny that people bought TV sets just to see him.

Unlike Berle, much of Billy Wilder's humor was sophisticated. Mostly, though, it was just funny.

(Clip shown from "Some Like It Hot")

COCHRAN: (VO) Sometimes, we didn't know whether to laugh or to gape in horror.

(Clip shown from "Sunset Boulevard")

COCHRAN: (VO) For THIS WEEK IN REVIEW, this is John Cochran.

DONALDSON: Let's talk about some of those events, particularly campaign finance reform.

George Stephanopoulos, the president send a pen...

ROBERTS: Right.

DONALDSON: ...to Senator John McCain, but other than that, he made it clear this is not his bill.

STEPHANOPOULOS: And--and he got a sentence in response saying McCain was happy. But he didn't look very happy all this week. What this is a part of, you know--and he also went out and started a campaign for other candidates, and that is, of course, to be expected. White Houses do politics, shocking. But this White House has really centralized it. They have centralized scheduling, polling, picking candidates in primaries.

Most interesting, though, is the policies that Karl Rove has tried to--used to try to drive a wedge in the Democrats: the steel decision, legal immigrants, and in this morning's paper, what did they announce? Medicare is now going to cover Alzheimer's. Four million people will be covered now. You can't get legislation, so go with executive action.

ROBERTS: Right. The president made this joke, of course, at the Gridiron Club, where he says, 'Prescription drugs, I'm for them. Campaign finance, I'll sign it. Child care, I'm for giving it to people who don't even have children.' But the--the fact is, he is--he is undermining the Democrats.

But the campaign finance signing was particularly humorous for him. Here, he had said, he thought portions of the bill were unconstitutional, he didn't really like it very much, but he signed it. But he signed it, we are told, with just Vice President Cheney and Condoleezza Rice in the room. They must

Two more suicide attacks in Israel; Yasser Arafat is defiant as Israelis invade Ramallah; President George W. Bush sides with with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; Sharon spokesman Ra'anana Givon have just happened to be here. I don't think you have to have witnesses to bill signings. But--no notary public on there. But he--he didn't want anybody to have a--as John McCain said, 'No one ever promised me a rose garden.'

DONALDSON: George Will, will you ever forgive the president for telling you in the year 2000 that he would veto just such a bill and then going ahead and signing it?

WILL: Oh, sure. I mean, nothing, not even my animosity lasts forever. However, let me say...

DONALDSON: I'm glad to hear that.

ROBERTS: Wait a minute. I...

WILL: Look, it does puzzle me why he felt he needed to sign it, because outside the editorial pages of a few major American papers there's hardly any constituency for it. But I do believe this president will be a better president when instead of being at 85 percent approval in the polls he's be at 55 percent. At which point he'll have to choose his friends back again, and govern more in accordance with their wishes.

DONALDSON: Well, what he's doing right now, of course, is using the war on terrorism to promote almost all of his initiatives wherever they are. He begins every speech that way.

STEPHANOPOULOS: And--and--and--but, you know, that doesn't really work. And that--I mean, one of the things the Democrats take comfort is is that the president's popularity in the war doesn't bleed over into other issues. The problem for them is they can't figure out what issues to use.

ROBERTS: That's right.

STEPHANOPOULOS: There's not going to be a recession right now. They had a big strategy meeting two weeks ago where they said Social Security is--is going to be an issue.

ROBERTS: Which is pretty pathetic, when you think about it. I mean, this is...

STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't know. It's worked before.

ROBERTS: That's the whole point. That's all we've got is this--this tired old Social Security issue.

STEPHANOPOULOS: (Unintelligible).

DONALDSON: Just a minute, here.

STEPHANOPOULOS: I don't...

DONALDSON: Some people think that's a lot.

WILL: They can always run against Hoover. They did that for a long time.

ROBERTS: Well, they're still doing that.

WILL: Look, the Democrats had a problem. They had three ideas, which for them is rather a lot. They said they were going to run against--they were going to wave the bloody shirt of Florida, saying he's not a legitimate president. They were going to say he's syntactically-challenged dunce, and that the recession was his fault. Well, the recession not only has gone, it may never have come by the time we get the statistics are sorted out. And September 11th has solved his legitimacy problems and, indeed, in a sense, his rhetorical problems.

STEPHANOPOULOS: But--but what--what they can do is take on his tax cut and say that it has drained the bank. And it has put--whether you like it or not--Social Security at risk. But they haven't--they're--they're not willing to do it.

ROBERTS: But--but still, they could...

STEPHANOPOULOS: Their reluctant. They're being too weak. They're not stepping up to the plate on this.

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ROBERTS: Well, they're doing it partly because of their own members, particularly members who are up for re-election this year, saying, 'Don't you dare do it because it's putting us at jeopardy if you do it.' So that--I mean, that--that--partly what you're seeing, though, is a president who is doing a lot of things Democrats like to see done. So it's not that they are not getting things they like, it's that they're not able to take credit for things they like.

DONALDSON: And this president--very wisely, I think, and like his father--goes to schools, African-American schools, goes out. I mean, the television pictures show him constantly out among the people.

STEPHANOPOULOS: And--and...

ROBERTS: Well, and--and he has a higher rating of people saying, 'He cares about people like me' than his father was ever able to achieve.

STEPHANOPOULOS: And he--he'd hate this comparison, but his position is very similar now to Bill Clinton's around 1995, 1996. His own party is grumbling because he's coopting Democratic issues and not sticking with the party faithful.

ROBERTS: Yeah, but his own party is grumbling only on--on the way to the bank. I mean, the truth is, he's raising tons and tons of money, he's out campaigning for the candidates.

STEPHANOPOULOS: That's true.

STEPHANOPOULOS: So the grumble factor will be very low.

DONALDSON: In the 30 seconds left, you were off last week, Cokie, and didn't get a chance to vote. I must point out that George Will and I knew that the best picture would be "A Beautiful Mind."

STEPHANOPOULOS: You're absolutely right, Sam. Well done.

DONALDSON: And "Moulin Rouge" went down in flames.

STEPHANOPOULOS: I still liked "Moulin Rouge."

ROBERTS: I would have voted for "Bet--A Beautiful Mind" as well.

DONALDSON: Well, all right.

ROBERTS: So now that--now that it's over it's so easy to say.

DONALDSON: Oh, yes. Monday morning quarterbacking is so simple. Thank you, all.

And when we come back, it's the most wonderful time of the year, at least according to George Will. And he'll explain right after this.

(Commercial break)

ROBERTS: Well, there's much excitement in my house, George, over opening day of the baseball season. Tomorrow, pitchers and catchers back at work.

WILL: Cokie, opening day causes Chicago Cub fans to wince. They are 99 percent scar tissue and here's why. The Cubs have not won the World Series since 1908, two years before Mark Twain died. So this is the 93rd year of the Cubs' rebuilding effort. But as this Cubs' T-shirt says, "Any team can have a bad century."

I grew up in Champaign, Illinois, midway between Chicago and St. Louis. At an age too tender to make life-shaping decisions, I had to choose between the Cubs and the Cardinals. All my friends became Cardinal fans and grew up happy and liberal. I became a Cub fan and the gloomy conservative. Fittingly, my little league team was the Mittendorf Funeral Home Panthers. Of course our color was black.

How awful were the Cubs of my youth? Since I became a Cub fan in 1948, they have lost 615 more games than they have won. One ex-Cub, this one, Harry Chiti was traded for himself. He was traded to the Tigers for a player to be named later. The Tigers took one look at Chiti and sent him back as the player named later.

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Back then, the publication, "Who's Who in Baseball" tried to say something nice about each player. The most it could say for Cubs' shortstop Roy Smalley was, "His errors are many, but he keeps trying." When Smalley came to the plate, the Cubs' broadcasters would say, 'Smalley is overdue.' Smalley retired overdue.

But this year, the Cubs' 93-year rebuilding effort pays off. There is Sammy Sosa, Moises Alou, Kerry Wood. This year the Cubs will win the World Series. They have to. They're overdue.

ROBERTS: Sounds liberal to me. Sam and I'll be right back.

ROBERTS: Well, Sam, what is on dot-com today?

DONALDSON: Well, on the Web cast, you know, people are familiar with sin taxes that apply to alcohol or cigarettes, trying to keep people from not using them and raise revenue. But now many states are trying to apply sin taxes to soda pop--there's sugar in it--to hamburgers and snacks--the fat in them--to raise revenue and keep you healthy.

Are you for that?

ROBERTS: Well, no. But I--I think that, you know, taxing food is a bad idea anyway. But what about diet soda pop? What about veggie burgers?

DONALDSON: No, they--they would be all right.

ROBERTS: I see.

DONALDSON: For the debate on this, logon to sam.abcnews.com.

ROBERTS: And Happy Easter to everyone.

DONALDSON: And Happy Easter. And until next week, that's THIS WEEK.

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Larry's guests, including the president of Lebanon, discuss the escalating violence between Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LARRY KING, HOST: Tonight: Yasser Arafat is under siege. Will he survive Israeli wrath over suicide bombings? As the battle escalates and talk turns to war, can the U.S. do anything to defuse the crisis?

Debating from very different perspectives, in Washington, the chief Palestinian representative to the United States **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

And in New York, Israel's counsel general Alon Pinkas.

Then an exclusive interview with the president of Lebanon, Emile Lahoud.

He's been on the phone with Chairman Arafat.

For perspective on American Mideast policy in these dangerous times, Democratic Senator Joe Biden, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

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And former U.S. Congressman Lee Hamilton, once chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Plus, from Jerusalem, CNN's chief international correspondent Christiane Amanpour; and on the scene in Ramallah, the site of Arafat's surrounded headquarters, CNN's Michael Holmes.

And they're all next on LARRY KING LIVE.

We begin with **Hasan Abdel Rahman**. He is at our Washington bureau, the chief Palestinian representative to the United States. And ambassador Alon Pinkas, the Israeli consul general is in New York.

We'll start with Mr. Rahman. What can -- I know -- have you spoken to Chairman Arafat today, or soon, or how is he doing?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REP. TO U.S.: Yes, I did. I spoke to him around 5:30 p.m. this afternoon. He was in good spirits. He realizes what's going on around him, of course.

He's been in his compound, subject to bombardment by Israeli tanks and Israeli cannons. And he realizes how dangerous the situation is; not for him, personally, but for the prospects of peace as a result of this incursion, invasion by Israel. He feels that those tanks are not only bulldozing the roads of Ramallah and the buildings around him, but also they are bulldozing the possibilities for peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

KING: Ambassador Pinkas, assuming that Chairman Arafat didn't order terrorist attacks and the terrible events of Passover, why the attack on him?

ALON PINKAS, ISRAELI CONSUL GENERAL: Well Larry, first of all, I can't assume

that he did not order attacks. I may estimate that he did not personally order them, but I can equally estimate that he knew about them or did nothing to prevent them, or condoned them; or knew about them in advance and did nothing to prevent them.

Why the attack? Why the incursion? For a simple reason: If the upper east side or the lower east side of New York are attacked, if New Orleans is attacked, if a pizza parlor in Chicago is bombarded; if Bethesda, Maryland is subject to daily shootings, if children in San Francisco can't go to school, then you defend yourself.

And this is exactly what we're doing. Now, we're doing something that the Palestinians, that Arafat, in particular, should have done -- committed to do and vowed to do for seven years, but failed to do or was incapable of doing, or couldn't care less, and lied his way through two successive American administrations and five Israeli prime ministers.

KING: Mr. Rahman, how would you respond to suicide bombings? In other words, how does a country deal with something like that, do you think? If you think Israel is responding in the wrong way, what should they do?

RAHMAN: First of all, I don't believe any of us supports suicide bombing, or any of us would endorse, condone any attack on civilians in Israel or by

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Israelis on Palestinians.

But we cannot view this in isolation from the context in which this takes place. Imagine yourself a Palestinian who has been living under illegal foreign military occupation for the last 35 years, three generations of Palestinians humiliated, deprived; their life and their dignity is violated on daily basis.

No hope. Living in a refugee camp.

Every single day of your life, you see your territory taken away from you by foreign, Jewish settlers, and you have no control over your destiny. And you have no power to combat this.

Just in the last three weeks alone, Israel moved 30,000 soldiers in Ramallah. Ramallah is a city of 25,000 people. You have 30,000 soldiers, 150 tanks, 300 people killed, 3,000 men blindfolded, stripped half-naked with their fathers, grandfathers and children together, put in detention camps by the Israeli army. If you are 20 years old and see your father humiliated in your presence by an Israeli soldier, or your mother is beaten up, or a settler abusing you, how do you react?

I believe that the Israelis should look at what they are doing to the Palestinians and try to modify their behavior and treat the Palestinians like their equal, and I assure you that the whole situation will change.

KING: Ambassador Pinkas, does he have a point in the fact that -- saying that the Palestinians growing up that way, what alternative do they have but to take some sort of action? They have no voice power, they have no vocal power, they have no standing anywhere, they have no -- they're not a country. What do they do?

PINKAS: OK Larry, let me try and address this logic. First of all, he has a lot of valid points in what he said. The problem is he's a negligible minority amongst the Palestinians.

Most of them think of suicide bombers, or homicidal maniacs who also blow themselves up, as role models. And most don't think -- or at least do not express themselves in very mellow and moderate Western -- in a very moderate and mellow Western way as Mr. Abdel Rahman did.

Let's follow the logic. Everything that Mr. Abdel Rahman described, suppose he's right in everything, for the sake of conversation, we sought to change at

Camp David. A year and a half ago with President Clinton under the auspices or mentorship of President Clinton, Prime Minister Barak laid on the table a very comprehensive, very ambitious, very forthcoming peace plan.

That is not, incidentally, Larry, dissimilar from what the Saudis are bragging about last week -- not dissimilar from the plan they presented in Beirut.

Now, let's assume that the Palestinians found some issues in that plan not to their liking or objectionable. So you're telling me that the gap between what President Clinton endorsed at Camp David and what the Palestinians wanted justifies 58 suicide bombers? I find that logic very, very hard to absorb.

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Now this, unfortunately, is a national liberation movement, or a revolution, if you will, that instead of philosophers and poets and statesmen, boasts and prides itself in suicide bombers.

What kind of political culture is this that we need to contend, that we need to confront, that we need to engage in a dialogue that makes martyrs out of suicide bombers?

KING: Are you saying, Mr. Ambassador, that Chairman Arafat can prevent a suicide bomber?

PINKAS: I'm saying that Chairman Arafat could have prevented 100 suicide attacks since Camp David. I'm saying...

KING: Let me get a break and we'll -- I just want to get a break. You'll be with us. By the way, both gentlemen, even though other gentlemen and ladies join us, will be with us throughout the entire program.

When we take a break, we'll come back with the president of Lebanon in a special interview that I taped a couple of hours ago, and then we'll return to our panel.

We'll be right back; don't go away.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

COLIN POWELL, SECRETARY OF STATE: IN that conversation with Prime Minister Sharon he advised me that the Cabinet was meeting to decide what action the Israeli government should take in response to the recent spate of terror incidents. And he also advised me that whatever actions they might decide to take, it would not include bringing any harm to Chairman Arafat or killing him.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We now welcome to LARRY KING LIVE President Emile Lahoud, the president of Lebanon. We understand, Mr. President, that you have spoken to Chairman Arafat today. Can you tell us what he had to say?

EMILE LAHOUD, PRESIDENT, LEBANON: Yes. I did this morning and he's in very high spirits, very good morale. And he was telling me that the tanks were surrounding him and were pounding his compound and that they were going inside his compound and that he wanted me to get in touch with the leaders of the world and tell them what is really happening.

This is something that has never been in history before: A president of his country being surrounded and pounded with tank and with no hope of anything else but to make him surrender. This is new.

KING: Mr. President, excuse me, did you call other world leaders?

LAHOUD: Yes, I did. I talked to Mr. Agnar (ph), the president of the European community. And I told him what he could do and we had a meeting of all

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the ambassadors of the big powers that will be held tomorrow at 10:00 to send a

message to their leaders telling them what is really happening, because I don't think in the 21st century this is the way to solve things.

KING: The United States says Israel has told it that it does not intend to harm Chairman Arafat. Do you accept that? Do you believe that he is safe from physical treatment?

LAHOUD: Well, I don't know, because from what I hear now, that there are only two rooms that haven't been taken yet, and all the fighting is going around these two rooms. So, we don't know. And it's not enough that we keep him alive, just barely alive in those conditions. This is not done in any country with a president. And this is not the way to solve things.

KING: Your prime minister says that this is not only an attack against Arafat, but an attack against the peace plan submitted by the Arabs. Do you share that view?

LAHOUD: Well, it's good that you ask me that. What happened yesterday was a historical moment for the Arab world. For the first time, there was solidarity all over the Arab world. First, the disputes that were in the past were solved. And a peace plan was brought forward, the initiative of Crown Prince Abdullah, and all the Arab leaders accepted that, and which stipulates, in short, land for peace. And they put in details what it means. And this is new. And just after we got that decision, then we hear in the morning that Israel was attacking Chairman Arafat.

KING: But, the reason they...

LAHOUD: Is that they way to answer that?

KING: The reason, I guess, they were doing it -- is not guess -- is acts of terrorism? Did that conference in Lebanon condemn all terrorism? Did it urge the prosecution of all terrorists?

LAHOUD: Lebanon was the first country that condemned terrorism when we had the 11th of September attack on the Trade Center. And we said we couldn't accept that. And we had that in our country. The same group tried on a smaller scale on the eve of the 20th century to the 21st, on the eve of the 31st of December, they had an attack on our soldiers. And we had for about four days of combat, and we stopped all these people.

And at that time, I remember very well the leader of that group, which called himself Aisha (ph), had as well a U.S. passport. And when he was killed in the combat, we were asked why did this U.S. citizen was killed. And human rights from the U.S. came here and asked why he was killed. We said, well, this is terrorism and they attacked without any reason and killed our soldiers.

KING: So you condemn all terrorists, including the acts...

LAHOUD: We condemn it, of course. And we are against any act of terrorism. But there is a difference between terrorism and somebody who occupies your land and wants to stay there and dictate his wishes. This is something not done in this world. That's why the only way is to sit around the table and find a

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solution, a peaceful solution. And that's what we asked in the summit yesterday and we wanted the world to hear that. And what we get in response? The Israeli attack on Mr. Arafat.

KING: Thank you, Mr. President. We'll be calling on you again. I appreciate you doing this at this late hour. President Emile Lahoud, the president of Lebanon coming to us from Beirut.

You're watching LARRY KING LIVE.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Welcome back to LARRY KING LIVE.

Joining us from Wilmington, Delaware is Senator Joseph Biden, Democrat of

Delaware and chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

In Washington, Lee Hamilton, who served 30 years in the U.S. House of Representatives, former chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. And now it's called the International Relations Committee. He's now director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

Remaining with us in Washington is **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the chief Palestinian representative to the United States.

And in New York, Ambassador Alon Pinkas. Alon Pinkas is the Israeli consul general.

All right Senator Biden, what's your read on all this? Both sides have been clearly defined. What's going on in your estimation?

SEN. JOSEPH BIDEN (D-DE), FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE: My estimation is this is Mr. Arafat's war. He had an opportunity 18 months ago. He gambled that he could reject a peace agreement, a peace settlement offered to him. And he's gambling since then that world public opinion would be able to be turned.

Can you imagine, Larry, what would be happening if Israeli citizens were going in the West Bank and strapping dynamite on themselves and blowing up Palestinian children? Can you imagine what the world would be saying and doing?

I find this bizarre.

KING: Mr. Rahman would say that the Israeli citizens don't have that kind of plight that the Palestinian people have faced. There would be no incentive for them to do that.

BIDEN: Well, there is every incentive for the Palestinian leadership. And by the way, I listened to Mr. Emile Lahoud, the president of Lebanon. You know, they call on -- the Arab world calls on the United States to intervene.

Where is the leadership in the Arab world? Can you imagine if Sadat were alive, he would be calling Sharon now and saying, we -- we -- should sit down. "We" meaning Sadat and Sharon, because it's obvious that this fellow Arafat's not going to settle this deal. It's obvious he has no interest in it.

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KING: Lee Hamilton, before we bring back Mr. Rahman and Ambassador Pinkas who are all going to be part of this through the rest of the program, what's your read Lee?

LEE HAMILTON, FMR. CHMN., HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE: Well, to be very frank, Larry, I've followed events in the Middle East for several decades. I don't think I've ever been more discouraged than I am tonight.

It's very hard to see a way out of this. And as I've been sitting and listening to this show tonight, I keep asking myself the question: How do we get out of this box?

I'm quite sure, at least from my point of view, that we do not get out of it by escalating the violence. I don't think the violence gets either party where they want to go. I don't think increased violence gets Israel greater security. I do not think increased violence gets the Palestinians any closer to a Palestinian state.

Furthermore, I don't think things will move forward at all unless the United States comes in pretty heavily. I think we should not have a policy of deny and neglect towards the Middle East. I think we should not have a policy of supporting escalating violence. I think we should not have a policy of "just say no to violence."

We've got to find a solution to this problem. The United States is going to have to lead.

KING: Mr. Rahman, what role do you see the United States playing right now?

RAHMAN: Well, if you allow me, Mr. King, before I answer this question.

There are three remarks I want to make.

One, that we did not reject out of hand a great offer that was made to us in Camp David. I want to refer Mr. Pinkas to the article written by no other than Rob Malley, the adviser to President Clinton, who said that Israel did not make any offer in writing to the Palestinians in Camp David.

And let me remind him that after Camp David we continued the negotiations until January; six months later we were negotiating. And on the 26th of September we were here, very close to where I'm sitting, negotiating with the Israelis, with Shlomo Ben-Ami and Dennis Ross.

And that same day when Mr. Sharon let 2,000 armed men to Al-Haram al-Sharif and provoked the disturbances that followed. And in the first week there were 69 Palestinians killed at the hands of the Israeli soldiers before one Israeli was wounded.

On the 26th of September, Yasser Arafat was dining in the house of Mr. Barak. And he appealed to him, and we appealed to the Americans, not to let Sharon go to Al-Haram al-Sharif because he's going to cause a religious conflict there.

Well, this is one.

Second, we do not pride ourselves of our suicide bombers, Mr. Pinkas. We are the Palestinian society that has produced more artists, more poets, more

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painters, more doctors, more engineers, more university students than any other society in the Middle East. We, in fact, hate the Israelis for turning our children into suicide bombers because you suck life and hope out of them.

Mr. Biden, I listened to you. I don't like to see our people wrapping explosives around themselves and going into Israel. But I want you also to condemn the Israeli tanks that go into the Palestinian cities and towns and shoot civilians.

You remember that there were 1,200 Palestinian civilians, 450 of them are children 16 years of age and less killed by Israel in the last 18 months.

I want you, Senator Biden, to take this same position and recognize the humanity of the Palestinians when they are victimized by Israel.

KING: Before, Mr. Rahman, you respond on what the United States should do I think ambassador...

RAHMAN: And I want to...

(CROSSTALK)

KING: I know, but I want -- before I get out of thought here, Ambassador Pinkas, you want to respond, and then we'll continue on.

PINKAS: Well, truthfully, Larry, I'd rather go on with the show the way you seem to -- you want to conduct it and you see fit to conduct it. I really don't want to be dragged into this selective memory that Mr. Rahman has.

KING: All right, from the way both of you sound...

PINKAS: Let me just say, really, one remark. There has got to be an end to this tendency that the Palestinians have to blame everyone except themselves for every tragedy they have self-inflicted on themselves.

They have said no to a 1937 British partition plan. They have said no to a 1947 United Nations-mandated partition plan. They have said no to negotiations ever since. They have accompanied this process with nothing but violence, terror, hatred, incitement and lack of credibility and trustworthiness.

And finally, they said no at Camp David. And they did, in fact, say no at Camp David. And I suggest you consult President Clinton, not any of his aides who wrote an article.

KING: Let me get a break and we'll come right back.

Christiane Amanpour and Michael Holmes will join us from Ramallah and

Jerusalem, and our panel will stay with us through the rest of the program.

Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We're back. Joining us on the scene in Ramallah is Michael Holmes, CNN

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correspondent who was near that compound soon after the storming. In Jerusalem is Christiane Amanpour, CNN's chief international correspondent. Earlier, had a lively phone interview with Chairman Arafat.

First, Michael, what's the latest from where you are, and how are you? Are you in any danger there?

MICHAEL HOLMES, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, I think it's fair to say that anyone in Ramallah at the moment, Larry, is in some sort of danger. It's about 4:30 in the morning here. And for the last 24 hours, the firing has been pretty much constant, not just around the compound but throughout the streets of Ramallah as well.

Just a short time ago, in fact, for about the last half an hour, there's been a fairly intense firefight happening about 400 meters from where we are just up the street. Heavy machine guns, tank-mounted machine guns, and also small-arms fire. It's certainly a pretty risky place at the moment for residents in particular who are all behind closed doors and also media as they drive around. It's fair to say. A cameraman was shot today as he was driving around -- Larry.

KING: Christiane Amanpour in Jerusalem, who has been done yeoman-like work as well all day today. Before we have you respond, here is a quick clip from Christiane's interview earlier today with Chairman Arafat. Watch and listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR, CNN SENIOR INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Are you able to rein in the violence?

YASSER ARAFAT, CHAIRMAN, PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY: You have to be accurately when you are speaking with General Yasser Arafat. Be quiet!

AMANPOUR: Mr. Arafat, what did you make of Colin Powell's statement...

ARAFAT: (UNINTELLIGIBLE). You are covering this question. This terrorist activities of the Israeli occupation and the Israeli crimes. Be fair.

(UNINTELLIGIBLE).

AMANPOUR: Can I ask...

ARAFAT: Thank you. Bye-bye.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: All right. Christiane, what do you make of that?

AMANPOUR: I make of that that he was really angry and he didn't like the question that I asked him about Colin Powell. The whole question was, what did you make of Colin Powell's statement? Will you and are you able to rein in the violence? And that certainly didn't go down well.

Of course, one can understand the pressure of being cooped up in a compound in a couple of rooms as a very large military incursion is pounding away outside your door. But certainly that struck, unfortunately, a rather raw nerve there.

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KING: What can you also tell us, Christiane, about the teen suicide bomber this morning?

AMANPOUR: Well, you know, what happened today in Jerusalem, it happened shortly after those tanks started going into Ramallah and started the assault on the Ramallah compound there.

What happened was that a woman, an 18-year-old -- at least this is what is being claimed and a video is being distributed showing an 18-year-old girl, a

resident of a refugee camp in the West Bank there, apparently affiliated with the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, which is a militant group that is also affiliated with the Fatah movement of Yasser Arafat.

In any event, went into this supermarket in Jerusalem and detonated the explosives. Two people were killed and at least 20 others were wounded. So that is what happened today in the middle of this new Israeli military action in the West Bank.

KING: Michael Holmes, we had an event today involving an Egyptian television crew. We're going to play a little tape of that. As we show it, can you tell us what happened?

HOLMES: Yes, Larry, as we understand it, this cameraman was driving through Ramallah filming, as we all have been doing in the past 24 hours, came across an Israeli tank and armored personnel carrier which apparently opened fire. A bullet came through the window, hit him in the jaw and he was hurt badly. He's going to live. Very dramatic pictures.

Now, what I can tell you is that he was driving in what we in the media call a soft-skinned car, which is just a regular vehicle. When we go out, we're lucky enough to have a very heavily-armored Land Rover that we drive around in which will stop most but not all bullets. Very heavy-caliber bullets such as those that come off these tanks will pierce the armor, but small-arms fires and other sorts of caliber weapons won't pierce it. We also, as you can see, we wear these flak jackets which got ceramic plates in front and they're kevlar and they will stop small-arms fire, nothing heavy caliber. And we also wear these helmets which protect our heads. So, you know, it's the best you can do. And we also have a military expert who travels with us and he advises us when and when we can't step out of the car, Larry.

KING: From your viewpoint, Michael, Israel says it does not want to harm Mr. Arafat. From your viewpoint, as the set-up there and the situation, is he in harm's way?

HOLMES: Oh, I think without question anyone in the Palestinian Authority compound today was in harm's way. There were 40 security officers, at least, of Yasser Arafat's security detail wounded. One was killed. Yasser Arafat himself has been in these two rooms that Christiane mentioned. He's there with a couple of advisers. They're pretty much the only rooms that haven't been gone through by Israeli troops.

I think it caught everyone by surprise that the Israeli military decided to actually take over the compound. Everyone expected them to ring the compound, but not to go in with such force. Is he in immediate danger? Israel says no.

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They don't intend to harm him. Palestinian spokesmen will stay, well, of course, he's in danger given what's been going on there today. It has been a few hours since we were outside the compound because, of course, it is being dark. But when we were there, there was still small-arms fires and grenades going off, Larry.

KING: Christiane, do you see any point of optimism here at all, or have we reached a low point in this apparently ongoing conflict that never seems to end?

AMANPOUR: Well, as you heard from your guest, former representative Hamilton, there does seem to be an immense amount of pessimism really hanging over this whole situation here. I mean, it is really sinking further and further into the abyss of violence, and it really is at unprecedented levels at this moment.

KING: Michael Holmes, do you have anything that you can say, boy, that things might turn here for the better?

HOLMES: Well, what I can say is that around the compound this evening, at

least the firing has died down. I can't say the same thing for the streets in Ramallah. We've heard several firefights this evening. During the day, we passed by Palestinian gunmen in the streets routinely. They're there, they're armed and they're walking around the streets. The firing tonight has been intense at times, not at the compound but in the streets. As to what happens in the next few hours as daylight comes is pretty much anyone's guess, Larry.

KING: Michael Holmes, thank you so much on the scene in Ramallah. He'll be following things for CNN throughout the day and we thank him for being with us. Christiane, we'll ask to remain. She may have some questions of our panel as well.

As we go to break, here's more of that occurrence involving Nile TV in Ramallah today. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Back to our lively discussion. Remaining with us in Jerusalem is Christiane Amanpour. Rejoining us in Wilmington, Delaware, Senator Joe Biden, chairman of Foreign Relations. In Washington, Lee Hamilton, director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Also in Washington, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the chief Palestinian representative to the United States. And in New York is Alon Pinkas; Ambassador Pinkas is the Israeli consul general. Senator Biden, Mr. Rahman points out that it's kind of one way -- you can go one way, how about the other way? How about the Israelis firing on Palestinians? Is this a plague on both thy houses?

BIDEN: Well, actually it is a plague on both their houses. I've been critical for 18 years of the settlement policy. I am not a great fan of Mr. Sharon's. I have been outspoken about the point that Lee Hamilton has made, that force will not get this done either way.

But the truth of the matter is that Israel is in -- the reason why this continues is Mr. Arafat and most of the Arab world believe that they're succeeding by not total, outright condemnation of the bombing.

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The president of the United States and the secretary of state has been very straightforward. They have put significant pressure on Mr. Sharon. They have been openly critical of Mr. Sharon. And I heard a deafening silence from the Arab world.

And so what I wonder is -- and I don't know how this gets settled, Larry, leaving the two parties to work it out themselves. This requires the United States, as Lee just said, get in with both feet, as well as the responsible Arab world get in with both feet.

KING: And Lee Hamilton, this president, I believe, is the first president to say there will be -- that we favor a Palestinian state. Shouldn't that have calmed things?

HAMILTON: Well, I think it's a positive statement, and helpful here. I think it's important to...

KING: Yes, but look what's happened since.

HAMILTON: Well, I know. But you asked a moment ago, is there any ray of light, any hope here. And I think there are some elements that give us some hope.

And the fact that the president sees that it's necessary to make some linkage between a call for a cease-fire and an ultimate resolution, I think is a step in the right direction.

It's very important here that we not have exaggerated expectations of what can be achieved in an extraordinarily hostile environment. The United States now must act to avoid catastrophe. It must act to avoid a further conflagration

in the region.

That means, I think, that we push hard, very hard for a cease-fire. And here I think I state a controversial point, but I've come to this conclusion: I think that the United States will not succeed in getting a cease-fire, or at least a long, lengthy cease-fire, without moving beyond just the security question.

I think you have to link the cease-fire to some kind of political process, even though that might be vague. And I think the president was, in a sense, trying to do that.

KING: Ambassador Pinkas. I think Sharon said today this could go on for quite some time. What's the end point?

PINKAS: Well, the end point is to...

KING: I mean, what must the Palestinians do to stop being shelled? In other words, what do they have to do that would cause Israel to say, we stop today?

PINKAS: Frankly, I don't know that there's anything the Palestinians could do to stop this, for one reason and one reason only: that the last 18 months have clearly indicated and demonstrated to us, almost in unequivocal terms, that nothing that the Palestinians say, nothing that the Palestinian leadership

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states -- this is a bankrupt leadership. This is a total corrupt leadership, politically, ideologically, financially, personally.

There's nothing that they can do that would stop this.

Having -- I understand question. Having said that, Larry, the only reason we went into Ramallah, the only reason we are operating militarily throughout the West Bank is to rout out the terrorists; to try at least -- try. I'm not saying we'll 100 percent succeed -- but try and demolish and obliterate the infrastructure of terrorism, the hotbed of suicide bombers that Arafat either declined to deal with, was afraid to deal with, or was reluctant to deal with. The endgame is obviously, definitely and comprehensively political. We know there's a political process at the end of the tunnel here. We hope there's a political process.

KING: Christiane, as a correspondent who has covered many of these things, can this be safely be called, to you, a war?

AMANPOUR: Well, the Israeli government officials who addressed the press conference earlier this morning after their emergency Cabinet session -- notably the prime minister and the defense minister -- used that very word, "war." So yes, frankly. In their terms it is, and they have outlined it as such.

I think there are a lot of issues here. You've just heard from Senator Biden and Representative Hamilton about the need for a political solution. Clearly that is a very serious view, and what the Palestinians have always talked about. And you've also asked about U.S. involvement, and what the Arabs can do. Well the Arabs, in the Beirut Summit, have done what they feel that they have done now -- in the words of the Saudis, put their cards on the table, for the first time collectively as a bloc offering normal relations to Israel.

And you know that Crown Prince Abdullah is going to come to the U.S. in April to see President Bush. And we're told that he's going to carry a very strong message that the U.S. get much more heavily involved and to put a lot of pressure on the Israelis, because they feel that the Israelis only listen to the U.S., and try to hammer out some political breakthrough, or rather some political process to get on track again.

KING: I got to get a break here.

And when we come back, we'll have Mr. Rahman respond to this and what he thinks the United States might do, and where he sees this all ending.

Don't go away.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

POWELL: We cannot lose sight of our goal. Despite the tragedy we see unfolding now on this holy week, we must not lose sight of the goal. We have to achieve an enduring and comprehensive peace for Arabs and Israelis alike.

This is the future. This is what we must achieve. And although things look

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dark now, we must have hope, and we must continue to work, and work hard.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Mr. Rahman, what should the -- in your opinion should the United States do, and where do you see this going?

RAHMAN: First, let me say this. And I will address that -- I promise you -- to address that.

KING: Well, we've got limited time. If you don't address it, we'll never get an answer.

RAHMAN: Well, no. It is important to say the following. When Mr. Pinkas failed to answer a question, he resorts to name calling. Bankruptcy of the Palestinian leadership, dictator Palestinian leadership. He continues to call naming exercise. That's not going to be helpful. I just want to remind Mr. Pinkas that we signed in 1993 an agreement with Israel, and that's the Oslo agreement.

During seven years of negotiations, Israel brought in the West Bank, 100 Jewish settlers. For the average Palestinian, the checkpoints, the military occupation continued and the Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories continued. Now, by the end of the process, which was supposed to bring a conclusion to the occupation, the Palestinians did not see a light at the end of the tunnel. And that's why unless there's a political dimension, and unless the Palestinians feel that finally the Israeli illegal occupation will leave us alone, there is no incentive for the Palestinians. And that's where the challenge for the United States comes. Because so far, the United States has focused on cease-fire, and did not address in realistic and practical way a method, a process that will lead us to a solution.

And the end, we know it. The Americans have said and the United Nations and Prince Abdullah that the end has to be a Palestinian state next to Israel.

KING: Well, wait. Ambassador Pinkas, do you agree with that? Do you agree a Palestinian state is inevitable, is the only way out of this eventually?

PINKAS: Yes, but that was evident at Camp David. That is not the issue.

There's no one to run that Palestinian state. I'm sorry to say, Larry, I've counted almost 900 hollow words in the last 90 seconds here.

Again and again and again, blame the world, challenge the U.S. what does Mr. Abdel Rahman mean? What do you mean the challenge to the U.S.? Could there have been more genuine a commitment, more serious an involvement than that of President Bill Clinton? Could there have been in history a better friend of the Palestinian cause than President Bill Clinton, and you double crossed him, too. And you cheated him, too, and you lied to him, too.

How many more presidents? How many more prime ministers are you going to lie to? And worst of all, Mr. Abdel Rahman, how long are you going to cheat yourself and delude yourself into this distortion of history that you --

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KING: All right.

RAHMAN: I really need to say something.

KING: Quickly. I want to get a final comment.

RAHMAN: I assure you, Mr. Pinkas, that Mr. Clinton does not agree with you. And Mr. Clinton if he is on television today, he will acknowledge that he has made a total mistake by blaming Yasser Arafat when he came out of Camp David. Because for domestic political purposes, like most American politicians he has to accused Mr. Arafat --

KING: I want to get a final comment. Senator Biden, listening to this it sounds I guess to some hopeless.

BIDEN: Well, if the two people talking are the ones that are going to be in negotiation, it is hopeless. The only way this works is you start from scratch again. You know, going back and arguing over who struck John when, where and what is not going to work. You have got to start from a blank piece paper again.

KING: But how, who -- how does that start start?

BIDEN: Well, I think it starts, Larry -- I've reached this conclusion. It requires us to be more forceful, as well as the Arab world to be in the deal, not on the sidelines. And it is not enough to say, we'll recognize. It is required that they put the same kind of pressure on Arafat that they expect us to put on Israel.

KING: Only got a minute. Twenty seconds, Christiane. Is it going to get worse, before it gets better?

AMANPOUR: It may do. And many people believe that even this Arab initiative that's come out, may not materialize for another few cycles of violence. But Anthony Zinni's still here, still trying to push for a cease-fire, at least in the sort-term.

KING: And Lee Hamilton, do you see any course for feeling some light at the tunnel?

HAMILTON: Oh, sure, there are some good signs. The Arab summit proposal is a step forward. It puts terms that are not acceptable to Israel. But at least it is a proposal.

KING: A start.

HAMILTON: The secretary of state had good advice for us a moment ago, we've just got to keep trying.

KING: Thank you all very much. Thanks to our panel. Thanks to our guests, earlier. We'll take a break. And When we come back, I'll tell you what's coming up over the weekend on LARRY KING LIVE.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

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KING: Tomorrow night a tribute to Milton Berle and Dudley Moore. Tragically, both died the same day. Sunday night we repeat our interview with Dennis Quaid who stars in a great new movie called "The Rookie." Really, a terrific movie.

And Monday night, Judge Judy returns to LARRY KING LIVE.

Aaron Brown returns Monday night, but finishing up a yeoman-like week.

Sitting in for her friend, in New York to hose "NEWSNIGHT," the one, the only,

Ms. Connie Chung. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT www.fdch.com

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The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer

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SUAREZ; SPENCER MICHELS; MARGARET WARNER; GWEN IFILL; TERENCE SMITH; KWAME

HOLMAN

BODY:

JIM LEHRER: Good evening. I'm Jim Lehrer. On the NewsHour tonight, a summary of today's news, including the latest from the Middle East, separate interviews with Palestinian and Israeli officials; a "what now?" report on raising campaign money; the analysis of Mark Shields and David Brooks; and some in memoriam images and thoughts about movie director Billy Wilder.

NEWS SUMMARY

JIM LEHRER: Israeli forces stormed Palestinian Leader Arafat's compound in the West Bank today. Tanks opened fire and knocked down walls, and soldiers went room-to-room, battling Arafat's bodyguards. Arafat was not injured. He took cover in an office without windows. Five Palestinians and one Israeli were killed. Hours earlier, Israeli Prime Minister Sharon declared Arafat an enemy.

In Washington, Secretary of State Powell said Sharon assured him Arafat would not be harmed. Powell also said he told Arafat to stop the attacks on Israelis.

And there was another suicide bombing today. A Palestinian teenager blew herself up outside a supermarket in Jerusalem, killing two people, injuring 20 others.

We'll have more on the Middle East in a few minutes. The U.S. military is investigating a possible friendly fire death in Afghanistan. He was the first American soldier to die during Operation Anaconda on March 2. The US War Commander General Tommy Franks today said the serviceman was thought to have been killed by the enemy in the mountains near Gardez. But General Franks said he noticed a U.S. gunship reported striking enemy forces in the same place at the same time.

GEN. TOMMY FRANKS: It is not cloaking something when I say I really don't have a preliminary thought on it. It was significant enough, coincidental enough that I thought we better take a look at it, so we will eventually know what exactly happened. But the fact is that we are not ever going to be able to absolutely eradicate the loss of life, and in some cases, the loss of the wrong life, when we're engaged in this kind of operation.

JIM LEHRER: The case was part of an early report on friendly fire and civilian casualties released by the Defense Department. Not all the findings

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were made public. The U.S. Government soon could have enough smallpox vaccine for every American. Health and Human Services Secretary Thompson made the announcement today. A drug company, Aventis, agreed to donate about 90 million doses. They've been stored in freezers for several decades. If still effective, they'd be added to 15 million doses already on hand, and 200 million more now in production. Thompson spoke in Washington.

TOMMY THOMPSON: In the end, we'll have a larger stockpile of smallpox vaccine in the event of an outbreak of a biological terrorist attack. It is going to provide great security to all Americans. I do want to emphasize that the probability, however, of an intentional release of the smallpox virus is extremely low. But the risk does exist, and, therefore, we must be prepared.

JIM LEHRER: A British firm is to deliver the 200 million brand- new doses by the end of this year. Americans spent more as they earned more in February. The Commerce Department reported today both consumer spending and personal incomes went up 0.6% last month. Consumer spending accounts for about two-thirds of all U.S. economic activity. That's it for the News Summary tonight. Now it's on to the latest turns in the Middle East, post- campaign finance law, Shields and Brooks, and Billy Wilder's movie magic.

FOCUS - WAR OR PEACE

JIM LEHRER: The Israeli military offensive. Ray Suarez begins our coverage.

RAY SUAREZ: The Israeli assault on Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat's Ramallah headquarters began early today. The move came after Israel's cabinet, in an emergency session last night, announced widespread action would be taken against Arafat's Palestinian Authority -- that, in response to the latest spate of suicide attacks that have left nearly 30 Israelis dead in three days.

ARIEL SHARON, Prime Minister, Israel (Translated): The government has approved principals for a plan for a wide military operation against the Palestinian terror. I want to tell you that in these very moments, the IDF forces are in the Mukataa, the center of Arafat's rule in Ramallah. Israel will operate to defeat the infrastructure of Palestinian terror and all its parts and components, and therefore will carry out wide activity until it reaches the goal. Arafat, who established a coalition of terror against Israel, is an enemy, and at this stage will be isolated. The government had approved recruiting of reservists as is required from the operational needs, in order to allow the IDF a continuous activity for an extended length of time and in additional terror centers.

RAY SUAREZ: Today, after Israeli tanks and bulldozers flattened the gates and shelled the walls surrounding Arafat's sprawling West Bank compound, Israeli troops stormed several buildings inside, including the one where the Palestinian leader was hiding. Gun battles erupted between Arafat's security guards and Israeli soldiers. Five Palestinians and one Israeli soldier were killed. At least 25 of Arafat's guards were wounded. During the Israeli offensive, Arafat huddled with his closest advisers in a windowless ground floor hideout. In a telephone interview with al Jazeera Television, he said would rather die a martyr than be arrested or forced into exile by Israel. Arafat also said millions of Palestinian martyrs are headed to Jerusalem. And it wasn't long before there was a suicide bombing in the holy city. A teenage girl blew herself

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up at the entrance to a supermarket, killing two people and wounding at least 20 others. Elsewhere in Jerusalem, Israeli security forces stormed the al Aqsa mosque compound, firing tear gas and using stun grenades to disperse stone-throwing Muslim worshippers. In Washington, Secretary of State Colin Powell said Israeli Prime Minister Sharon had promised him Arafat would not be harmed. Secretary Powell also said it was the recent Palestinian terrorist attacks on Israel civilians that ended recent progress in peace negotiations.

COLIN POWELL: That's what has caused this crisis to come upon us, not the absence of a political way forward, but terrorism in its rawest form. We have spoken out clearly and do so again now, for Chairman Arafat to act, act against those responsible for these acts, and to make clear to the Palestinian people that terror and violence must halt now. All those who support peace must reinforce this message. While we understand the Israeli government need to respond to these acts of terror and the right of the Israeli government to decide what actions best serve the interest of the Israeli people, we call on Prime Minister Sharon and his government to carefully consider the consequences

of those actions. Chairman Arafat is the leader of the Palestinian people, and his leadership is now even more central to trying to find a way out of this tragic situation.

RAY SUAREZ: The Secretary said that U.S. Envoy Anthony Zinni would remain in the region and continue talking with both sides.

JIM LEHRER: Now to the official Palestinian position, and to Margaret Warner.

MARGARET WARNER: And with me is **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the Palestine National Authority's chief representative to Washington. Mr. Rahman, I understand you've spoken to Yasser Arafat in the last hour or so. What did he say?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: Well, he's in a very good and high morale. He believes that he is the fighter for the cause of the Palestinian people. He realizes that there is an aggression committed or being committed by Israel against him personally, and against all of the Palestinian people; he is one of the Palestinian people -- these 3.4 million Palestinians who live under one of the most brutal military occupations in history.

MARGARET WARNER: Give us a sense of where he is. I understand this compound is about a city block big and he is in one particular building. Is he still in this windowless office that he was described as being in earlier today?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: Believe me, I did not talk to him about where he is. We spoke about other issues. But he informed me of his high morale and of his attempts to speak to other leaders around the world. He is being contacted by many people at this moment, by the Europeans, by Arab leaders, by Palestinian leaders, to give support and express their condemnation of Israeli attack against him and against Ramallah and the Palestinian people.

MARGARET WARNER: Secretary Powell said as you know, that Ariel Sharon assured him that Mr. Arafat is not a target either to be killed or to be expelled. Does Mr. Arafat still feel he is a target?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: With all due respect to Secretary Colin Powell, I don't see how can he believe first of all or trust Mr. Sharon. We remember all what
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happened in 1982 -- how Mr. Sharon lied to his prime minister and to the Israeli cabinet and he was reprimanded for that. Mr. Sharon is a liar. He cannot be trusted.

MARGARET WARNER: I guess what I'm asking -

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: And let me just continue because when you use cannons and tanks to attack a civilian compound, you can kill somebody by accident.

MARGARET WARNER: I see. So the fact that they-- if they really wanted to kill Arafat, they already could have, could they not?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: The operation is not over yet. As I was talking to President Arafat, Israeli tanks were firing on his compound. What is there in Arafat's compound to use so many tanks to attack it? I mean I was honestly disappointed with the statement made by Colin Powell because we respect Mr. Colin Powell. But I wonder how he allows even himself to accept that the elected leader of another people be attacked by the army of an occupying nation without outrage from the United States and from Mr. Colin Powell personally.

MARGARET WARNER: Sharon said himself that he wanted to isolate Mr. Arafat. What do you take that to mean, and has he succeeded in further weakening Mr. Arafat's hold, essentially, on the Palestinian National Authority, on Palestinian security forces, or is Arafat still in charge?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: This is an outrageous statement, Margaret. How would even I consider what Mr. Sharon says, to isolate Yasser Arafat? Yasser Arafat is the elected leader of the Palestinian people. He is respected, recognized by 180 nations around the world. What lie does Mr. Sharon, who made a career of being a

terrorist, have to isolate Mr. Yasser Arafat? That should be the question. And I am amazed that there is not enough outrage guess against this action, reckless action by Sharon, dangerous action, which puts not only the future of peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis in danger, but the whole stability of the region.

MARGARET WARNER: All right. Let's talk about terrorism because you brought that up and Sharon of course, brought that up today saying as he said before, that Arafat runs a coalition of terror, that they're going in to root out this infrastructure. Are you saying that even though some of the groups that have done some of these attacks such as the al Aqsa brigades are tied to Fatah, PLO's military wing, that Arafat has no control, no ability to rein in any of the attacks?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: Margaret, you and I know that terrorism was introduced to our region by no other than the Israeli leaders. You remember that two of the Israelis first prime ministers, Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir, were both wanted by the British for assassination of the international mediator. So we know who introduced terrorism to the region. Now there are certain Palestinians who are involved in acts of violence that we reject, but there is a difference of having one individual Palestinian acting violently and when terrorism becomes the policy of the state of Israel.

MARGARET WARNER: Are you saying, though, that terrorism is in no way the policy of the Palestinians?

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HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: Absolutely not. On the contrary, we have condemned. We have tried to contain it, but you cannot isolate what happens from the overall context that is created by Israel. Remember that for 35 years, the Palestinian people are living under the most brutal illegal military occupation, to use the words of Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations. And this occupation sucked life out of the Palestinians, left them hopeless, desperate, poor, destitute, and they live under a state of siege by the Israelis.

MARGARET WARNER: So are you saying--

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: I'm saying that Mr. Sharon and the Israeli policies are responsible for pushing those young Palestinians to become terrorists.

MARGARET WARNER: And therefore, is your answer to Secretary Powell who even today called on Yasser Arafat to go after the terrorist attackers, that there is nothing that can be done?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: Unfortunately Mr. Colin Powell is missing the point. He should point fingers to Mr. Sharon to move his soldiers, his army, his settlers, from the Palestinian territories. And I assure you that we are not going to follow them across the green line. We will be able then to live in peace with a state of Israel next to the state of Palestine. But let me tell you what. As long as the Israeli illegal military occupation continues in the Palestinian territories and as long as we have those Jewish Talibans settlers in the Palestine, 300,000 of them, the most extreme coming from Brooklyn and New York and other places to settle in the Palestinian territories, we cannot expect to have peace. Peace can be achieved only when those guys leave us alone and leave us as a free people.

MARGARET WARNER: So are you predicting more suicide bombings?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: If this situation continues, if the occupation continues, if the brutality of the Israeli army, the killing of Palestinian young people, the imprisonment of Palestinians, the humiliation of the Palestinians, no one can stop the Palestinians. The only one to stop the violence is to eliminate the causes of violence and the cause of violence is the illegal military occupation.

MARGARET WARNER: Mr. Rahman, thank you very much.

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN: Thank you very much.

JIM LEHRER: Now to Ray Suarez for the official Israeli position.

RAY SUAREZ: Joining us is Alon Pinkas, the Israeli Consul General in New York.

Mr. Pinkas, what is the objective of the current Israeli military move in the territories?

ALON PINKAS: The objective, sir, is to do what Mr. Arafat took upon himself in the various commitments he has made and the vows he has taken and to rout out the terrorists, to dismantle, obliterate and destroy the terrorist infrastructure that Mr. Arafat himself has, for the last year and a half at least, been harboring and directly and deeply supporting, and to possibly get to

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the-- to as much ammunitions and armaments as possible. The second objective, which is political, is to signal to Mr. Arafat that his own political survival is at stake here, if he hasn't gotten that message until now. And the third objective is to isolate him so as not to incite, so as not to galvanize his people with these out of the planet speeches he has made in the last year and a half, speeches that have unfortunately contributed to the political culture, this maniac, maniacal political culture of homicidal and suicidal bombers.

RAY SUAREZ: If he is, as you say, isolated, how can he be an instrument or in any way affect the future, the near term future of stopping the violence in the West Bank and Gaza?

ALON PINKAS: Well, I don't know that he is instrumental in doing that. And I beg to differ with anyone who seriously believes that he remains central to that objective. This is a man who has lied most of the time to most of the people and then all of the time to all of the people for the last seven years. But we still believed him and then again for the last year and a half ever since Camp David. I don't know that he has the ability. I don't know that he has the capabilities, but more importantly, I don't think that he has the will to quell down the extremist elements in the Palestinian-- in Palestinian society, or, for that matter, the mainstream elements in the Palestinian Authority who have become no less involved in terror. This is a man who has branded suicide and homicidal bombers as role models for the Palestinian people -- not philosophers, not poets, not statesmen but suicide bombers, 18-year-old drugged and doped idiots who blow themselves up in pizza parlors. This is the political culture we need to contend. It is not different from al Qaeda; it is not different from Hezbollah. It is not different from all those violent terror organizations that sprung up from the shortcomings and deficiencies of Arab political culture.

RAY SUAREZ: Over the years, your government and previous Israeli governments have called Arafat a partner for peace. Today-- well yesterday Prime Minister Sharon referred to him as the enemy. But Colin Powell said his leadership is central to finding a way out. Can he be both those things at the same time?

ALON PINKAS: I concede to you that it sounds some irreconcilable. But look, Colin Powell looks at it from the vantage point of the Secretary of State of the United States of America. Colin Powell also knows that Thomas Jefferson is not going to replace Arafat, which is why we may be stuck with the man we know rather than the devil that we don't know. But I think that Colin Powell has a very thorough knowledge and familiarity with the subject matter, and he would tell you that it is very, very doubtful whether or not Arafat could still play a useful role in destroying this terrorist infrastructure. He, after all, help set it up.

RAY SUAREZ: Does Israel want him out of the occupied areas, expelled from the

region?

ALON PINKAS: It's almost an irrelevant question, sir. I mean whether we want him out or not almost doesn't make a difference. The people who should really drive him out are the Palestinians, to which he delivered nothing but poverty and hopelessness and misery and tragedy again and again and again. These are all self-inflicted tragedies. This has nothing do with the so-called occupation. This is a man who has not, and I'm sorry to use the cliché again, who has not missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity ever since he came into the

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political scene. Whether he is expelled or not is almost immaterial. The Palestinians need to take a hard look at what their leadership provided them with, what their leadership is providing-- what kind of future their leadership is going to provide them with, and they should be the ones deposing him. At the end of the day, looking back, you're right. We did regard him as a partner for peace for many, many years since 1993. It was difficult for us to-- it was almost unpalatable to us in the beginning, but we still maintained-- even though there were hardships and obstacles, we still maintained that he is the trustworthy partner. We have reached an almost irreversible conclusion that this man has undoubtedly outlived his usefulness as a political partner. We don't see any way we can move forward with this man-- I'm talking politics here-- with this man in the future. And a political course of action is imperative here, be there no doubt.

RAY SUAREZ: Well, whether or not the Palestinians move against his leadership, right now Israeli army tanks and our guest just before you Mr. Rahman said that in the past hour, you could still hear shells hitting the compound. They're in control of the area and would seem to have, in the near term, a lot to say about Yasser Arafat's fate.

ALON PINKAS: I'm sorry. Who has a lot to say about his fate?

RAY SUAREZ: The Israeli army.

ALON PINKAS: Yes, but we are not out to get him. We are a democracy. We do not depose the leader. I heard Mr. Abdul Rahman describe a few minutes ago, Arafat the elected leader. He also never lost an election which puts him in line with the great statesmen of our error, Colonel Qaddafi and Saddam Hussein of Iraq. Having said that, we are not in the business of deposing of him, expelling him or eliminating him all together. Yes, we're in the region, but this compound that you are talking about-- in the regional confines of his compound I mean, but that compound consists of ten buildings. We are not out to get Mr. Arafat personally.

RAY SUAREZ: Will those troops leave that area once they achieve their objective? What happens next?

ALON PINKAS: Well, what happens next is that we will-- there are tactical military moves all of which derive from the political objective. The political objective is to turn the Palestinian Authority into a militia-free entity. To tell you that we can 100% have guaranteed success here, I cannot. However, we will stay there, from a military tactical point of view, as long as necessary. It could be a few days, it could be a few weeks. I don't expect it to be more than that. And hopefully we will rout out as many terrorists as we can. We will disarm as many as we can. And we will apprehend as many as we can. Incidentally, all those that we seek are people that have been on wanted lists that were submitted to Arafat time and time again by Israel, through the American envoys in the last several years, through European envoys. He has done nothing to apprehend them. Some of them, incidentally, have blown themselves up killing innocent Israeli children in the process.

RAY SUAREZ: Consul General Pinkas, thank you for being with us.

ALON PINKAS: Thank you.

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JIM LEHRER: Still to come on the NewsHour tonight, Now what on campaign finance, Shields and Brooks, and the movie art of Billy Wilder.

UPDATE - SETTING LIMITS

JIM LEHRER: Kwame Holman reports on the impact of that new campaign finance law. (Cheers and applause)

KWAME HOLMAN: In a single night during the 2000 election year, the democratic party collected \$26 million in unregulated-- so- called soft money-- contributions from wealthy donors at a Washington gala. Some individuals gave hundreds of thousands each.

SPOKESMAN: We don't care what's in your wallets, we care about what's in your hearts.

KWAME HOLMAN: The donations have come to dominate political funding.

SPOKESMAN: My friend and yours, George W. Bush.

KWAME HOLMAN: Days earlier, in Washington, then-candidate George W. Bush helped collect \$21 million in soft money from a small number of donors for the Republican Party. But on Wednesday, President Bush quietly signed into law the death warrant for soft money collected by the political parties. The new campaign finance law bans national parties from collecting soft money. The ban begins in November. Starting then, contributions to the parties will be limited to \$2,000 per donor. From a headquarters near the Capitol Building, Terry McAuliffe runs the Democratic National Committee.

SPOKESMAN: Any good action?

SPOKESMAN: Lots of it.

SPOKESMAN: Good. Dennis, how we doing? Ready to beat some Republicans?

KWAME HOLMAN: As the party's main political and fundraising operation, the Democratic National Committee is preparing to live without the large, unregulated contributions from individual donors, which totaled \$100 million for the DNC during the last election.

TERRY McAULIFFE, Chairman, Democratic National Committee: I knew this thing was going to happen, so we have been working very hard here to build a small donor base to the party. It took the DNC 20 years, from 1980 to 2000, to get 400,000 direct mail donors. Just last year we went from 400,000 to 850,000 just in one year. Our e-mail addresses in one year have gone from 70,000 to 780,000, so we have been working very hard in here. We're going to make up that \$100 million, we're going to do it with federal money, and we're going to do it with small donors.

KWAME HOLMAN: McAuliffe, like most Democrats in Congress, favors the soft money ban, against the general opposition of Republicans.

TERRY McAULIFFE: It's the right thing. I mean, it will take politics back to the grass roots. It will get big money out; it will get a lot more people

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involved in the system. It will get... force us as a political party to go out and get a lot more smaller checks, which is the right thing.

KWAME HOLMAN: Three blocks away at Republican national committee headquarters, McAuliffe's counterpart, Marc Racicot, suggested why members of congress finally voted to ban large, unregulated donations.

MARC RACICOT, Chairman, Republican National Committee: There was an appearance problem. I'm not certain that there was a real problem, but there certainly was an appearance problem, and I can tell you, having been a candidate

and an officeholder, that you are particularly sensitive to these perceptions.

KWAME HOLMAN: Like the Democrats, Republicans mostly purchased election-year TV ads with their soft money, but it funded other campaign activities as well, and Racicot says its loss be felt.

MARC RACICOT: It will diminish the capacity, quite frankly, of the national parties and local state parties to be as active as they have been in the past.

SPOKESMAN: Clay Colder in Georgia has posted \$680,000. Which is good. And that's an open seat, so we have a good chance of winning that seat.

KWAME HOLMAN: Upstairs in the same building, political operatives for Republicans in the House of Representatives geared up for this year's congressional races. Unlike the democrats, Republicans long have maintained a list of donors who can afford to contribute up to the new \$2,000 limit that arrives next November. But congressional committee legal counsel Don McGahn says such contributions, known as hard money, won't fill the gap left by the ban on unlimited soft money.

DON MCGAHN, National Republican Congressional Committee: That supposes that we've been sandbagging on our fundraising, that somehow there is all this hard money out there that we haven't raised, and now that you've banned soft, we're going to miraculously find new money. I don't think there is new hard money out there. We simply will not have the same kind of funds that we currently have. And we will not be able to get the Republican message out in a way that we have in the past handful of elections, at least. It certainly will cause irreparable harm to the party committees, and that's Republicans and democrats.

KWAME HOLMAN: Across town, the coming ban on soft money was met with smiles at the headquarters of Common Cause, one of the advocacy groups that lobbied for the ban for years. Chief lobbyist Meredith McGehee:

MEREDITH MCGEHEE, Common Cause: Who this legislation favors are average Americans that don't have the ability to go out and give \$1 million in one day as a soft money contribution, as we've seen under the current system. I think this is a system that will favor the party that most nimbly and quickly understands that you're rewarded for involving people and the grassroots as part of your political party, and not become, as the parties are essentially right now, soft money Laundromats.

SPOKESMAN: You want money?

KWAME HOLMAN: The political parties also use the large, unregulated

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contributions to help fund their congressional candidates, so the coming soft money ban will cut off a potential source of campaign revenue. To help congressional candidates compensate, the new law doubles the \$1,000 limit on contributions the candidates collect on their own. Maryland Democratic Congressman Albert Wynn opposed the soft money ban because it could hurt the party's efforts to increase minority voter participation. He says increasing the contribution limit for congressional candidates also has a downside.

REP. ALBERT WYNN: Well, it puts a premium on individual contributors who can contribute large amounts of money, up to \$2,000. This bill certainly hasn't helped the poor, the working class individuals. It's probably reduced their clout. It's increased significantly the clout of the professional cadre in this country.

SPOKESPERSON: Marge Roukema, too taxing - too liberal--

KWAME HOLMAN: The other major provision of the new law tries to broadcast attack ads run against congressional and presidential candidates. It requires disclosure of the ad's sponsors and limits on their funding. But that provision could be struck down by the courts, leaving candidates at the mercy of attack

ads.

REP. ALBERT WYNN: I think the courts will strike down the provisions of the law that affect third parties independent groups, special interest groups from participating with advertising and the like. On the other hand, I think the restrictions against the other political parties will remain in effect.

KWAME HOLMAN: For now, both parties are likely to raise unregulated political money up to the November deadline.

FOCUS - POLITICAL WRAP

JIM LEHRER: To the analysis of Shields and Brooks; syndicated columnist Mark Shields and David Brooks of the "Weekly Standard." Mark, what did you think of the way the President signed that campaign finance law into law?

MARK SHIELDS: We don't know that he signed it, Jim. All that we have is the word of Dick Cheney and Condi Rice who were in the office at the time.

JIM LEHRER: Very early in the morning - like 7:00.

MARK SHIELDS: That's right.

JIM LEHRER: No big pens and all of that, people standing behind him, any of that. No John McCain -

MARK SHIELDS: No John McCain.

JIM LEHRER: -- no Chris Shays.

MARK SHIELDS: No Marty Meehan or Chris Feingold. It reminded me, Jim of when John Warner first ran for the United States Senate in Virginia, there was a very controversial issue, and it was about the equal rights amendment and whether the time that was running out on the ratification of it ought to be extended. And

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his Democratic opponent, Warner's Democratic opponent said he was for the equal rights amendment but against extending the time, thus effectively alienating both sides of the argument, those who were against the amendment and those who were for it. What President Bush did was essentially displease both sides. He displeased obviously those like Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House who said this was Armageddon for the Republicans and the big majority of Republicans on the Hill who did not want him to sign the law, and he displeased the Democrats, the reformers who had fought seven years for this, including John McCain. And his self-portrait as sort the conciliator and the man who brought civility and bipartisanship, I thought took a little bit of a hit by this stealth performance.

JIM LEHRER: What did you think?

DAVID BROOKS: I basically agree with that. My theory is that they put a clothespin on his nose while he was asleep; they put the pen in his hand, and they sort of moved the paper under it so he wouldn't be morally tainted by signing the thing. He came across looking unprincipled and cynical because if he was for it, he should have signed it in the proper manner. If he was against it, he should have vetoed it. I agree - the way he did it just made him look Machiavellian.

JIM LEHRER: Yeah. Let's go to the news of this day, the Middle East. Do you share the sense that the only the United States can prevent this thing from getting worse than it is now?

DAVID BROOKS: I don't think we can now. I think what's happened is that it used to be about land for peace. But after Arafat walked out of Camp David, people on the Palestinian side okay, we are thought going to have peace soon but some day we are going to have everything we want. So they pushed back their mental time frame and then they maximalized their demands. And then it became -- from a land-for-peace conflict, it became an existential conflict. And then what happened was the suicide bombers took over. I really think the suicide bombers,

which are a weapon, have transformed the whole culture of the Middle East because the suicide bombers and the passions they arouse of martyrdom and vengeance, of murder, of religious purity are just more powerful than the passions of politics, of negotiations, and give and take. And I think the care and nurturing and celebration on television of suicide bombers has been like a narcotic, an addiction that has transformed the situation, which will have to burn off until we can get back to where it was before, which was a negotiation between two people fighting over the same piece of land.

JIM LEHRER: And, Mark, President Bush and his folks have been reluctant to get really involved in this till now. But do you agree with David that even if they wanted to now, that things have to calm down, things have to move on, on their own before we can do anything, we meaning the United States of America?

MARK SHIELDS: I don't know, Jim. I'd say if there were an identifiable United States policy, I would say it was in tatters. I don't think there has been one.

It was the anti-Clinton policy. There was a hands-off laissez-faire be removed and it has been a disaster. It has been a total disaster. And I think if we stand exposed, this particular week, after requesting the Sharon government to allow Yasser Arafat to travel to the Arab conference, that we stand exposed as powerless and without influence in the Israeli government. And everybody knows

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the special relationship between the United States and Israel, the fact that you know, we've given over \$90 billion in foreign aid to Israel -- more than any other nation -- and that we have been its staunchest supporter and ally. And so I think right now where I might disagree with David is this: that if anything is going to be done by the United States, it is going to require the direct involvement of perhaps both the Secretary of State and the President.

JIM LEHRER: Is that likely to happen, David?

DAVID BROOKS: I think it is now. I think today was an important day, and especially Colin Powell's press conference today, because I thought the Administration recovered the moral gyroscope it had lost for two weeks. And we had gotten in a world where we were excusing terror, minimizing terror, rewarding Yasser Arafat by trying to meet with him, trying to get him up to Beirut for the conference because of the terror. But what Bush and Colin Powell said today was that, you know, for a little while we sort of thought that Yasser Arafat was a constructive force in the Middle East. Now we have gone back to our original position, which is that he is not going to be a constructive force and Colin Powell essentially gave the green light to Israel today.

JIM LEHRER: You think he did?

DAVID BROOKS: I think that's how it certainly is perceived on both sides of the issue; that he basically said we understand Israel does what it needs to do and I think they understand that you can't fight terror around the world while sort of being morally neutral about it in the Middle East.

JIM LEHRER: Do you see it the same way?

MARK SHIELDS: I didn't. I didn't see it that way. Now maybe I missed some nuance there. Jim, I have to say that this week, you know, I don't know what Yasser Arafat's argument is the case to be made for him, but when the policy of Israel and the Sharon government has been to emasculate, to humiliate, to marginalize Arafat, which they have done, and then to hold him accountable for not being a strong, forceful, dominant commanding leader, I mean it is an impossible demand to place upon anybody, regardless how you feel about Yasser Arafat. And I really think that that is sort of the reality we're stuck with and struck with this week. I don't think that-- I did not get the sense that there was an endorsement of any kind of carte blanche on the part of the Israelis.

JIM LEHRER: In fact--.

MARK SHIELDS: By the United States.

JIM LEHRER: He said Sharon, Prime Minister Sharon should keep in mind the impact of what he is doing, what the Israeli government is doing.

MARK SHIELDS: That's right.

JIM LEHRER: And you read that as an equal signal to both sides.

MARK SHIELDS: I do. This is the first administration and I think it is to be commended, to declare unequivocally that it supported the creation of an independent Palestinian state. But then having made that lofty goal part of its

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policy, it walked away. To achieve the conditions that are necessary on both sides across the board, it is going to require long hours, great details, great detailed, tough work and right now up until now, this administration has not shown the willingness to make that kind of a commitment.

JIM LEHRER: The other point that was made, been made two or three times in the last week on this program by various folks, is that it is impossible to look upon this in just an issue thing now or terrorist versus these terrorist governments or whatever, because of the hostility, the hatred that Sharon as an individual has for Arafat and vice versa, and that until that is off the table, very little else gets on the table.

DAVID BROOKS: The problem is the Israeli government used to be split. The Israeli population used to be split. That's no longer true. We are living in a post-Oslo world where after Arafat walked out of Camp David, the Israelis felt suckered. They felt we gave these people rifles and now they're using us to shoot at us.

JIM LEHRER: I know. But I'm just talking about today. I'm talking about what it is going to take to get from here to there and these two men have no motivation, at least that's what our guests have been saying all week from both sides.

DAVID BROOKS: Or the people. They do represent their people.

MARK SHIELDS: I think David made a key point. There has been a sea change and the sea change is this in my judgment. The last Intifada in 1987, there were 25 Palestinian deaths, casualties, for every one of the Israelis. Now, I mean 75-80% of the casualties are suffered by the Palestinians but it is a three to one ratio. And I think what we have seen is a sea change in the sense that on the part of those most militant on the Palestinian side, that time and history are on their side, and that they're willing to absorb this and that it has led to a more profound and more serious change in Israel and the way Israelis live, and the fear that grips so much of their lives, and I don't know how that plays out politically, but it is a major, major factor in the political equation at this point.

DAVID BROOKS: The other thing that happened was the suicide bombers are no longer Hamas and Islamic Jihad. They're al Aqsa, they're Fatah, they're people directly connected to Yasser Arafat. That's why I'm saying suicide bombing has taken over the conflict. There's not a weapon in the conflict that has taken over the conflict. So to talk about the casualties on both sides, to me they're unequal casualties. One is terrorist casualties, the other is efforts, crude, sometimes efforts to combat terrorism. And I don't say that as you know this radical - type person. If it was up to me, hundreds of the settlements would be gone tomorrow but I think we have to acknowledge it is not a parallel situation - that one side really did at Camp David made a brave offer for peace. The other side rejected it and we are living in the shambles of the death of the Oslo process.

JIM LEHRER: Does that mean the Clinton Administration dropped the ball?

MARK SHIELDS: I don't think, no. I think you have to be a pretty narrow and pretty petty partisan at this point to criticize Bill Clinton for the efforts

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they made. I mean they came that close. And Ehud Barak bet his political career on it, a public career, a great Israeli hero as prime minister, cost him the election. There is no question. Yasser Arafat turned down the greatest opportunity for peace and Palestinian autonomy ever presented. I think Bill Clinton will earn history's gratitude and admiration for what he did.

JIM LEHRER: What do you make of Sharon's statement the other day that the real problem here between the United States and Israel is that the United States is trying to get people together to take action against Iraq, and Israel is trying to get together to take action against the Palestinian terrorists?

MARK SHIELDS: Well, I don't think there is any question that Dick Cheney's trip was a failure. I mean he went over there to organize a coalition against Iraq. While he got there, he found out there was no appetite for it, no enthusiasm for it and there was a great concern about Israel and the Palestinians, and the trouble that that meant throughout the entire Arab world as they saw it. And at that point, the United States became engaged. So there is the question about how deeply are we involved? How deeply are we committed?

JIM LEHRER: Quick closing.

DAVID BROOKS: Basically I agree with that. During the Cheney trip we got ourselves wrapped around the Tenet, Mitchell, and all of that - all the moral clarity that Bush started this war with was gone. And that moral clarity I think really did return today.

JIM LEHRER: We had three other things we were going to talk about -- we'll do it next week, I promise. Thank you.

FINALLY - IN MEMORIAM

JIM LEHRER: Finally tonight, the work of Billy Wilder. Terence Smith reports.

TERENCE SMITH: Billy Wilder, one of Hollywood's greatest writer- directors, made more than 50 films in his prolific career.

ACTRESS: Mr. Demille, I'm ready for my close-up.

TERENCE SMITH: In 1950, he challenged Hollywood's comfort zone with his dark satire "Sunset Boulevard." Wilder's portrayal of an aging film star with delusions about her former fame earned him the Oscar for best screenplay.

ACTOR: The audience left 20 years ago, now face it.

ACTRESS: It's a lie. They still want me?

ACTOR: No they don't.

ACTRESS: What about the studio, what about Demille?

ACTOR: He was trying to spare your feelings.

TERENCE SMITH: Wilder, known to his friends as a cynic and a romantic, focused his films on human frailties-- especially greed.

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JACK LEMMON: ("The Apartment") I have my own office now. You may be interested to know I'm the second youngest executive in this country. The only one younger is the grandson of the chairman of the board.

TERENCE SMITH: In "The Apartment," Jack Lemmon played a corporate climber trying to impress Shirley MacLean's character. The film brought Wilder a first: Three Academy Awards for best screenplay, best director, and best film.

JACK LEMMON: I used to live like Robinson Caruso, shipwrecked among eight million people and one day I saw a footprint in the sand and there you were.

TERENCE SMITH: Born in Galicia in what is today Poland, and raised in

Austria, Wilder fled Germany ahead of the nazis and came to the U.S. in 1934. He mastered English and became one of Hollywood's craftsman. The range of his films was extraordinary.

JACK LEMMON: This may even turn out to be a surprise party.

MARILYN MONROE: What is the surprise?

JACK LEMMON: Not yet.

MARILYN MONROE: When?

JACK LEMMON: Better have a drink first.

MARILYN MONROE: That will put hair on your chest.

JACK LEMMON: No fair guessing.

TERENCE SMITH: In his 1959 slapstick "Some Like it Hot," which became an immediate classic, Wilder again teamed with Lemmon, who spent much of the film in drag opposite Marilyn Monroe.

MARILYN MONROE: I had no idea you were such a big girl.

JACK LEMMON: You should have seen me before I went on a diet.

TERENCE SMITH: His darker films included "Lost Weekend," a brutally realistic depiction of an alcoholic, which won him Oscars for writing and directing.

ACTOR: Come on, man, join me. One jigger of dreams, huh?

ACTOR: No thanks.

TERENCE SMITH: And "Double Indemnity," a 1944 account of a murder scheme gone awry.

HUMPHREY BOGART: Never resist an impulse, Sabrina, especially if it is terrible.

TERENCE SMITH: Among his comedies, "Sabrina," starring Audrey Heyburn and Humphrey Bogart.

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MARILYN MONROE: Do you feel the breeze from the subway? Isn't it delicious?

TERENCE SMITH: And "The Seven-Year Itch," with Marilyn Monroe. In addition to his six Oscars, Wilder received the Irving Thalberg Memorial award at the 1988 academy awards.

BILLY WILDER: As I look back in life, I've lived a charmed life. I never expected something like this.

TERENCE SMITH: Two nights ago, in Beverly Hills, Billy Wilder died of pneumonia. He was 95.

TERENCE SMITH: And joining me now are Janet Maslin, the former movie critic for the "New York Times"-- she is now a book critic with the paper; and Kevin Lally, author of "Wilder Times: The Life of Billy Wilder." He is the managing editor of "Film Journal International," a monthly. Welcome to you both.

Janet Maslin, when you look back on this extraordinary career, what defines Billy Wilder as a filmmaker for you?

JANET MASLIN: Well, the interesting thing to me is that it took such a long time for him to be acknowledged as the great director that he was, that he spent a lot of his career as a kind of stealth genius. He-- the unifying things in his films was that mostly they were very good, they were very entertaining, they made money, they brought out the best in the actors who were in them. But somehow when he was doing his best work, this was generally not thought to be-- these were not the attributes of a great director. It took a long time for his reputation to catch up with him.

TERENCE SMITH: But it did?

JANET MASLIN: It finally did, but really only, I think really only in recent years.

TERENCE SMITH: Kevin Lally, what you look back at this and you see the extraordinary range of these films, and you see the dark and you see the light,

was there a thread that tied those two things together, those two aspects of his personality?

KEVIN LALLY: Well, I think it he was not at all afraid of being a groundbreaker. In the 40s, there is a remarkable string of films that broke a lot of barriers. When you think of "Lost Weekend" and its serious portrait of alcoholism and "Double Indemnity", which was an essential film noire and a film that dared to have two lead characters plotting a murder. This was pretty extreme for its day -- and a film that's kind of overlooked called "A Foreign Affair" which is a farce set in bombed out post-war Berlin. He was a very, very audacious film maker from the very beginning and a great groundbreaker.

JANET MASLIN: And one of the things he dared to do was make each film different from what he had done before so you didn't really identify Wilder hallmarks. It was a certain level of quality that united them but he never tried to repeat what he had done.

TERENCE SMITH: Janet Maslin, tell us also what a director does in a film, and
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what a director did in his era as opposed to today.

JANET MASLIN: Well, director is kind of the conductor who hires and fires everybody in the orchestra, and in his case, writes the music, too, because he was the writer, co-writer of many of his films. But if you take a story like "The Apartment" where have you two people working for a company and they're both being really ill-used in a kind of sordid way by this company, that could be a sad story, it could be a bawdy comedy, it could be a romantic story, it could be any number of things. And what he did in that case was to make it all three. But that's what the director does, really, is to shape it and steer it overall.

TERENCE SMITH: Kevin Lally?

KEVIN LALLY: Well, if you look at "The Apartment," it is considered, I believe the American film institute voted it one of the top 25 comedies of all time but has a suicide attempt in the middle of the film, a very devastating suicide attempt. Or you look at a film like "Some Like it Hot," which is one of the great, great film farces but it's a farce propelled by the St. Valentine's Day massacre. There is an amazing mixture of light and dark in all of his films.

TERENCE SMITH: Janet, go ahead.

JANET MASLIN: I was just going to say he made a lot of films that covered that kind of range and that not only weren't they like other films of his, they weren't like anything. I don't think you can find much of a precedent for "The Apartment" or for "The Lost Weekend" or, you know, for "Sunset Boulevard," certainly.

TERENCE SMITH: Kevin Lally, you mentioned before, the tension between the hero and the antihero in some of these films. His heroes certainly were flawed characters, very human characters, weren't they?

KEVIN LALLY: And he took a lot of criticism for that. People thought well, he is just being very superficially cynical because very often these cynical anti-heroes had redemption at the end of the film, but he would argue that well how can I show redemption if you don't show what comes before it?

TERENCE SMITH: Janet Maslin, when you look back at his work, was he a writer who directed or a director who wrote?

JANET MASLIN: He was a renaissance man is what he was. He was a filmmaker. He was a complete and total filmmaker who managed to make, I think, really brilliant work in the mainstream of American entertainment, which is harder thing to do than you can imagine.

TERENCE SMITH: And yet Kevin Lally, I think he thought of himself as a writer, did he not?

KEVIN LALLY: I think he would certainly have said that he was first and foremost a writer; that he became a director to protect his words. And indeed, again he was a groundbreaker in that sense because there were very few of his contemporaries who, at that time, made the transition from the screen writing ranks to a successful directing career.

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The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, March 29, 2002

TERENCE SMITH: Janet Maslin--

JANET MASLIN: What makes you think of him as a director is certain actors who worked for him, when you think of their best performance, it tends to be in his film. He was just a wonderful director of actors. Think of William Holden or Gloria Swanson or Monroe.

KEVIN LALLY: Or Marilyn Monroe's two most celebrated performances.

TERENCE SMITH: He brought out the best. Is that what you are saying?

JANET MASLIN: That's more than what a writer does. That's really into the realm of directing.

TERENCE SMITH: Kevin Lally, his films pushed the edge, as you said before, about alcoholism and the "Lost Weekend" and so forth. Was Hollywood, perhaps, not ready for him when he did some of these things?

KEVIN LALLY: Well, there was-- there were a couple of particular cases when Hollywood wasn't ready there. There was a film in 1951 called "Ace in the Hole" which was loosely based on the Floyd Collins case and it's about a journalist who exploits a situation in which a man is trapped in a cave-in. And it is basically a film about the media's exploitation of a sensational incident. I mean it is extremely timely today, but at the time the public just wasn't ready for this film and indeed a lot of critics weren't ready for it, either.

JANET MASLIN: He took a terrible critical drubbing with a lot of his films. He talked about the fact that Pauline Cale for instance never liked anything he did. He was amused but I'm sure it hurt at the time.

TERENCE SMITH: At one point he and co-author had 14 consecutive hits, not a bad average.

JANET MASLIN: That's the problem. They were hits, you know. If you want to be an esteemed artist, you better not have 14 hits.

TERENCE SMITH: Hits with the audience but not necessarily with the critics.

JANET MASLIN: That's right.

TERENCE SMITH: Kevin Lally, when you look at his work, can you see signs of it or a legacy when you look at other directors today?

KEVIN LALLY: I think his greatest legacy is the sheer craft of his work. If you look at films like "Some like it Hot" it is like an incredibly efficient machine and a lot of writer directors take their inspiration from the sheer craft - craftsmanship of his work.

TERENCE SMITH: That's terrific. Kevin Lally, Janet Maslin thank you both very much.

RECAP

JIM LEHRER: Again, the major developments of this Friday: Israeli forces

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The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, March 29, 2002

stormed Palestinian leader Arafat's compound in the West Bank. On the NewsHour tonight, a Palestinian official said he spoke to Arafat a short time ago and remained in high morale and an Israeli diplomatic on the NewsHour said Israel was not out to get Arafat. And the U.S. military investigated a possible friendly fire death in Afghanistan. A reminder: "Washington week" can be seen on most PBS stations later this evening. We'll see you online, and again here Monday evening. Have a nice weekend. I'm Jim Lehrer. Thank you and good night.

LOAD-DATE: April 2, 2002

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SHOW: America At War

March 29, 2002, Friday 9:00

AM ET

NETWORK: MSNBC Cable Programming

MEDIUM: Cable

LENGTH: 117 words

BODY:

START: 30.10

Breaking News. Recap from above.

Visual - Supermarket Bombing, Jerusalem.

Visual - Israeli Troops, Ramallah.

Sound Bites - Ariel Sharon, Israeli PM, says we are going to do what is necessary.

Sound Bites - On the Phone, Yassar Arafat, Palestinian Authority, says he would rather be martyred.

Sound Bites - On the Phone, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Chief PLO Representative to the US, says since the arrival of Cheney to the region two Palestinians have been killed. He says Sharon knows that Arafat isn't responsible for what happens. He says Sharon is starting a war.

Visual - Arafat.

Visual - Sharon.

Visual - Suicide Bombings.

Visual - Ramallah Compound.

END: 38.51

SEGMENT-ID: 23

PROGRAM-ID: msnbc0900.0329.23

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2002

SHOW: Q&A WITH JIM CLANCY 03:30 PM Eastern Standard Time

March 28, 2002 Thursday

Transcript # 032801cb.k18

SECTION: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL

LENGTH: 3333 words

HEADLINE: Will Saudi Peace Plan Work?

GUESTS: Adib Farha, Alon Pinkas, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**

BYLINE: Colleen McEdwards, Rula Amin

HIGHLIGHT:

Can the peace plan created by Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah work?

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

YASSER ARAFAT, PLO LEADER: I would like to reiterate our readiness toward an immediate cease-fire.

COLLEEN MCEDWARDS, CNN ANCHOR (voice-over): The Palestinian leader says he is ready to work for a cease fire. It follows an agreement reached at the Arab League Summit in Beirut, where there was hope for reconciliation and a new path to peace in the Middle East.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: There is absolutely no comparison between today and

yesterday. We're quite far from what took place yesterday.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: This is a historically significant strategic decision that came from the Arab countries from the Arab summit, and it's the first time since 1948 where the Arab leaders have come unanimously, willing, saying we will recognize Israel, we will normalize relations.

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Q&A WITH JIM CLANCY 03:30 PM Eastern Standard Time March 28, 2002 Th

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We hope that the Arab world is reaching a strategic crossroad, maybe for the first time, with the Saudi initiative, really willing to sit down and negotiate peace.

MCEDWARDS: But the summit's achievements are now in the shadow of an act of terror after a bomb ripped through a seaside hotel in Israel.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The Palestinians will continue their struggle against Israel until they reach their goals.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: WE will have to decide what the right response will be, because it is the obligation of the Israeli government to protect its people.

MCEDWARDS: On this edition of Q&A, the Saudi peace plan: can it work? (END VIDEO CLIP)

Hello and welcome to Q&A. I'm Colleen McEdwards. Jim Clancy is off.

Just minutes ago, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat announced that he was ready to work for a cease fire under the Tenet plan that was proposed last year by the United States CIA director, George Tenet.

All of this follows the unanimous adoption by the Arab League of the first Arab peace initiative for the Middle East.

The plan says it offers Israel security and normal relations, in exchange for withdrawal by Israel from the Palestinian territories.

Well, CNN's Rula Amin has been covering the summit and is with us now from Beirut where, Rula, I imagine there has been some reaction there already to this statement by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

RULA AMIN, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Well, actually, we have not heard any reaction to that statement except from the Palestinians themselves, who say this is the only way out.

Yasser Arafat is making his position very clear. He wants a cease fire, but it's a two way track. Israel has to do what it needs to do, according to the Tenet plan.

However, we have been hearing from other Arab leaders throughout this summit in the last few days who have been emphasizing this. They say there is an urgent need to stop the violence, to put an end to the violence, but they also say that Israel has to stop attacking Palestinian towns. They say Israel has to stop its siege of Palestinian towns. And the main message is that there is no way that there will be peace along with occupation.

Bashar al-Assad, the president of Syria, was very clear. He said occupation is one of the utmost forms, maximum forms of terrorism. And this is something we've been hearing a lot from the Arab leaders here who say that they don't want to see civilians hurt, they want to spare civilian lives, but on both sides.

Whenever we ask them about the suicide attacks in Israel, they always point

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Q&A WITH JIM CLANCY 03:30 PM Eastern Standard Time March 28, 2002 Th to the other side. They say, you know, on the other side, there are people who are killed too, Palestinians.

They also say that as long as there is occupation, you will always find some kind of reaction. And occupation is an extreme form of terrorism that will produce such actions.

These are the kinds of statements we have been hearing here in the summit --

Colleen.

MCEDWARDS: But are you getting a sense, I mean, is there support among the Palestinians for a cease fire at this point?

AMIN: Well, you know, here in the Arab summit, the Arab leaders we have been hearing from, yes, they do want to see a cease fire very much.

Today they offered a peace plan, offering Israel peace and normal relations between Israel and the Arab states. In return they say Israel must withdraw from all land occupied in 1967 and its occupation, and have a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

This is the message that they are sending to the Israeli people, they say, not only to the Israeli government. There is a lot of skepticism here about the Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon. Many people here don't believe that he really wants to have peace with the Palestinians or the Arabs.

But they believe that their message should reach the Israeli people, that there is a chance to have peaceful relations, to live normally in this region.

But there is a price, and that is to end occupation -- Colleen.

MCEDWARDS: Have they spelled out what they mean by normal relations with Israel? What exactly are they talking about in this proposal?

AMIN: Well, you know, the clearest answer for that that we have heard came from the Saudi foreign minister, Saud al-Faisal.

Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia was the one who proposed this initiative to the Arab leaders. He was the one who envisioned it. And Saud al-Faisal today in an interview with Christiane Amanpour, he did say - - she said, what is normal relations, and he said, just like the normal relations we have with the United States. Which means peaceful relations, embassies, trade, friendship, visits, tourism. That's the way Saud al-Faisal spelled it out to us.

MCEDWARDS: All right, Rula Amin, thanks very much. Appreciate it.

Now, before we get you some more analysis of events at the summit, here's what the Lebanese prime minister had to say about the Middle East peace initiative. He spoke with CNN just a short time ago.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

RAFIK HARIRI, LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER: Using force to solve the problem between the Palestinians and the Israelis, it will not lead to anywhere. It

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Q&A WITH JIM CLANCY 03:30 PM Eastern Standard Time March 28, 2002 Th will lead to more destruction and more pain, to more killing on both sides.

We know very well that the one who is paying, the one who started this, but nevertheless, we are looking forward. We want to put all that era behind us and look toward the future.

I'm sure that the Israelis and Arabs can live together if the Israelis decide clearly and strongly that they want to make peace with the Arabs and they want to live in peace with their neighbors.

Otherwise, unfortunately, things will continue as it is.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MCEDWARDS: And here is how the initiative was received in the United States.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

RICHARD BOUCHER, U.S. STATE DEPT. SPOKESMAN: When's the last time the Arab League stood up and supported a proposal by someone like the crown prince of Saudi Arabia about making peace in the region including Israel? That's what different. That's what's new.

Is it good to have that difference out there? Is it good to have that as the stated goal of the Arab League and the Arab states, in moving down a road to negotiation? Absolutely.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MCEDWARDS: And now someone who has been following developments at the Arab League Summit. We've got Adib Farha, a professor at the Lebanese American University, and he is with us from Beirut.

Mr. Farha, thanks for being here.

I'm going to get to the details of this Saudi plan in just a moment, but first I want to ask you about this statement by Yasser Arafat, that he's ready to work towards peace based on the Tenet plan.

Do you have a sense from where you sit how important this is?

ADIB FARHA, LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY: It is certainly very important to have peace and to have the state of siege that Palestinian townships have been under for quite a while now.

You can't expect President Arafat to be able to be persuasive and ask his people to stop the intifada without peace. He has to have a good argument, and he cannot force them to just sudden quit and lay down their arms when they continue to be under siege and when Israel continues its atrocities against them.

They live in a state of humiliation, and I think they're fed up. There has to be a good reason, a good motivation, a good incentive.

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MCEDWARDS: Sure, but he's saying this has to be based on the Tenet plan, without any alterations to the plan that Israel has expressed some reservations about.

FARHA: Well, it's not unlike Israel to agree to a plan and renege. They agreed to the Tenet plan. There is no reason why they should renege now. The Arabs have demonstrated, as recently as this afternoon, that peace is a strategic options for them, that we are fully committed to peace, and now it is up to the other side to reciprocate.

MCEDWARDS: You know, Mr. Farha, Israel has just said the very same thing about the Palestinians, that it's usual for them to declare a cease fire, to declare cooperation, and then to go back on it. What has to happen here, do you think?

FARHA: It is not the Palestinians that are occupying Israeli territory. It is the other way around.

MCEDWARDS: All right. And just a quick question to you about the Saudi peace proposal. How important a message do you think it is that the Arab nations have come out in support of this.

FARHA: I think it's a very loud, clear, unequivocal message that we want peace. The Arab masses are convinced that it is Israel that doesn't want peace, and we would certainly like Israel to surprise us. They have shown every indication, particularly P.M. Ariel Sharon, that he doesn't want peace. He talks about peace, and he practices war. He talks about a cease fire, and he continues to occupy the Palestinian townships. And he puts them under siege. And his forces continue to occupy Palestinian territories. His forces continue to bombard Palestinian police headquarter and the Palestinian Authorities headquarters.

How can he expect President Arafat to be able to stop his people or to go out and roundup -- quote, unquote -- "terrorists" when his police force is itself under siege?

MCEDWARDS: All right, Mr. Farha, I'm going to stop you there.

We're going to get more on the Palestinian point of view later in the program. Thanks a lot for your time, though, appreciate it.

And coming up, Israeli and Palestinian reaction to the initiative from the

Arab League and all the developments in the last several minutes or so.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KOFI ANNAN, U.N. SECT. GEN.: I believe profoundly that it is the right of both Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace and security. I have just spoken to both P.M. Sharon and Chairman Arafat. I urged the leadership of both peoples to stay the course and continue the quest for peace. They say the first step is an immediate cease fire.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

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Q&A WITH JIM CLANCY 03:30 PM Eastern Standard Time March 28, 2002 Th
(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MCEDWARDS: Welcome back to our discussion about the Arab League initiative aimed at peace in the Middle East, and also comments just a few moments ago by Yasser Arafat, that he's ready to work towards a cease fire under the terms of the Tenet plan.

With reactions to this, we are joined from New York by Alon Pinkas, the counsel general of Israel to the United States, and **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the Palestinian representative to the United States. And he is with us from Washington.

Mr. Pinkas, to you first for your reaction to the statement by Yasser Arafat.

Alon Pinkas, U.S. COUNSEL GENERAL OF ISRAEL: Excuses me for not being very much impressed with that statement.

Unfortunately, it takes Mr. Arafat 18 months to reach the conclusion that he needs a cease fire.

If you look at what happened and what transpired in the Middle East over the last three days, you will see that there was a terror attack literally an hour ago that may still be going on right now in which three Israelis have been murdered.

There was the terror attack last night in Netanya in which 21 were murdered.

There was an ambulance that was stopped at an army checkpoint in which we found two bands of explosives traps. There have been two United Nations members murdered by a Palestinian policeman in the West Bank.

So excuse me, looking back at history from 1967, 1937 rather, onwards, for really not being impressed with Mr. Arafat's declarations.

MCEDWARDS: All right. Mister...

PINKAS: And I'm sorry, I'm sorry -- let me just add one more sentence. Mr. Arafat has lied so many times to so many people on so many issues, and in so many variations, that I am very skeptical when it comes to believing a word he says.

MCEDWARDS: Mr. Rahman, why should Israel take this seriously when the terror attacks continue?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO THE UNITED STATES: First of all, let me say the following.

For the last 35 years, the Palestinian people have been living under an illegal military occupation, which has moved 300,000 of its Taliban Jews into the West Bank and Gaza.

In the last 17 months alone, 1,200 people were killed, 400 of them are children under the age of 16, 8 percent of them are women. 8,000 homes have been destroyed. The infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority has been destroyed by Israel.

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And today, as you and I are speaking here today, there are 40,000 Israeli soldiers in the West Bank and Gaza, 500 tanks. There are thousands of

Palestinians in Israeli jails.

This, in our view, is a habitual act of terror, sponsored by the state of Israel against the Palestinians.

How can anyone expect the Palestinians not to try to defend themselves in the face of this onslaught by the major military power in the Middle East?

If the Israelis move out of our territories and leave us alone, to live in peace, then I assure you that they will have peace.

MCEDWARDS: Let me give Mr. Pinkas a chance to respond to that. Mr. Pinkas, does the presence of Israeli troops in the Palestinian controlled areas create this sort of problem?

PINKAS: Colleen, I'm sorry you're missing the story.

These misleading conceptions by Mr. Rahman, these lies that he perpetuates every day, kind of distort the story.

This is not about occupation. This is about a Palestinian leadership that is completely bankrupt, leading a nation of homicidal maniacs for the last 60 or 70 years.

This is a so-called national liberation movement that doesn't pride itself in its poets and philosophers, but on its suicide bombers.

Now, as for the issue of occupation, first of all, it's not an illegal occupation, because before 1967, (a) there was Arab aggression against Israel, (b) there was no Palestinian state, (3) there was no legal sovereign in the West Bank and Gaza. So the term illegal goes to demonstrate the ignorance that Mr. Abdel Rahman usually demonstrates.

Now, as for Israelis presence in those territories, which I have to tell you I don't like and 60 percent of Israelis don't like -- we sought to change that in the year 2000 in a peace process right here in the United States. It was called Camp David. Under the auspices of then President Bill Clinton, then Prime Minister Barak put forth a very elaborate plan, a peace proposal, a definitive and conclusive peace proposal.

The Palestinians flatly rejected it because they cannot accept it because they are incapable, unwilling to come to terms with reality.

This is a leadership that is not just morally and ideologically bankrupt.

This is a leadership that absolutely prides itself on nothing but inflicting tragedy and misery on its own people.

MCEDWARDS: Gentlemen, I'm going to ask you for a time out with me here a little bit. I want to steer us in a different direction.

I think everybody appreciates the arguments on both sides of this, but I don't want us to get too bogged down in some of the rhetoric that we do here,
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frankly, over and over again.

I really want to hear you both on where to go from here, and let's talk about that Saudi peace proposal and how realistic, how important it is, and whether or not the fact that the Arab League has endorsed it really makes a difference here.

Mr. Rahman, to you first.

RAHMAN: Let me say before...

MCEDWARDS: Mr. Rahman, please, I want you to take the question.

RAHMAN: Allow me -- he called me ignorant. And I think you should not allow this kind of impoliteness to be on your show. You should have stopped Mr. Pinkas when he called ignorant.

MCEDWARDS: Mr. Rahman, I've asked you both to tone down the rhetoric a bit and let's try to talk about where to go.

RAHMAN: Excuse me. Excuse me. Excuse me. There is a statement by the

secretary general of the United Nations last week, before the Security Council, in which he said that Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories is illegal.

There is 180 states around the world who consider Israelis occupation of the Palestinian territories under international law illegal.

When Mr. Pinkas speaks about the bankruptcy of the Palestinian leadership, he does not look at the criminality of the Israeli leadership throughout the last 52 years, when they uprooted the Palestinian people from their country, from their homeland, destroyed 482 villages and towns in order to establish an exclusive Jewish state.

This is the biggest crime that has been committed in modern history against any other people.

MCEDWARDS: Mr. Rahman, thank you. I'm going to give you one more chance to ask (sic) my question, please. The Saudi peace proposal.

RAHMAN: Yes. We have accepted the Saudi peace proposal.

We believe that it is a courageous stand by the Arab countries. It puts the ball in the Israeli court. If Israel is serious about reaching an equitable peace with the Palestinians and with the Arabs, this is the formula that is consistent with international legality, with 242, 338, resolutions of the United Nations, and with the position of the international community.

MCEDWARDS: All right.

RAHMAN: But if the Israelis want to look for loopholes here and there, they can always find an escape to having to face this challenge that was put to them today by all the Arab countries combined.

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MCEDWARDS: Mr. Pinkas, can Israel afford to turn its back on this?

PINKAS: No, we're not turning our back on it, and we're not dismissing it, and we're not taking it lightly, and...

MCEDWARDS: But you haven't accepted it, though.

PINKAS: Wait -- because we need to study, seriously, the details.

Look, when you're talking about an Arab plan, don't forget what Arab world you're talking about.

You're not talking about Hamilton, Jefferson, and Madison. You're talking about the world of Qadhafi and Saddam Hussein and (UNINTELLIGIBLE). So excuse me of being somewhat skeptical and leery of these plans.

Having said that, Colleen, I think it's a positive step forward from which perhaps a good thing could emerge, and I think we await to see the dynamics in the Arab world on whether or not this is a serious plan or this is just a PR stunt that works or may not work.

The fact that -- you look at the speech made by the Syrian president, Bashar al-Assad, the fact that he accepted the plan is irreconcilable with the speech that he had made.

On the issue of the Palestinian acceptance of the plan, of course the Palestinians accept the plan. What other opportunity, what other possibility do they have to mingle with these people?

If the Saudi Arabians ever gave a damn about the Palestinians, you would not have refugee camps in Lebanon, in Syria, in Jordan or in the Gaza strip.

MCEDWARDS: I've got to stop you. Alon Pinkas, **Hasan Abdel Rahman** -- thank you both. Really appreciate it.

And that's all the time we have for Q&A this day. I'm Colleen McEdwards.

The news continues, right here on CNN.

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Fox News Network

SHOW: FOX ON THE RECORD WITH GRETA VAN SUSTEREN (22:29)

March 28, 2002 Thursday

Transcript # 032804cb.260

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 1524 words

HEADLINE: On The Record

Political Headlines

GUESTS: Hasan Abdel Rahman

BYLINE: Greta Van Susteren, Geraldo Rivera

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

VAN SUSTEREN: Welcome back. I'm Greta van Susteren, and this is ON THE RECORD.

Now back to the Middle East, where Palestinians are bracing for payback for yesterday's Passover massacre, this as Hamas claims responsibility for an attack tonight on the West Bank that killed four Israelis. The gunman was also shot dead. Geraldo Rivera has more from Beirut -- Geraldo.

RIVERA: You know, Greta, one of my heroes, Edward R. Murrow, once said that on some stories, there is no other side. And that's the way I feel about Hamas.

The attack -- you know, tonight I don't know all the specifics, but I do know that four settlers were shot dead by this Hamas terrorist before he himself was killed. I do know, however, that the attack in that hotel in Netanya was against elderly civilians, many of them in their late 60s, 70s, even 80 years old.

When I interviewed the Hamas representative yesterday, he tried to justify that as some kind of military action. It got very heated. It was an ugly and confrontational interview. Obviously, I was fired up, and so was he. And then as

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we were leaving, he brought up my race and religion. And it just shows that this is a racist SOB who is motivated, just as the Nazis were, not by the right or wrong of the enemy but by who they are.

Here that's confrontation.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

Why did you ask me if I was Jewish

HAMDAN: It's just a question.

RIVERA: Why?

HAMDAN: Just a question.

RIVERA: Why?

HAMDAN: Because you were talking about them as if they were innocent people.

RIVERA: They are innocent people!

HAMDAN: No they are not. They are occupying our land.

RIVERA: They were -- it was Passover! They were...

(CROSSTALK)

HAMDAN: They are occupying our lands. Why you are not accepting the idea that they are...

(CROSSTALK)

RIVERA: ... the premise that they murdered innocent people?

HAMDAN: This was...

RIVERA: A man doesn't do that!

HAMDAN: Do you want to...

RIVERA: A man doesn't do that!

HAMDAN: Do you want...

RIVERA: That's not a man's action! That's a murder's action!

HAMDAN: It's your opinion.

RIVERA: A crazy person's action!

HAMDAN: That's your opinion, and I...

RIVERA: Allow me to have it.

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HAMDAN: That's your opinion. I respect your opinion.

RIVERA: OK.

HAMDAN: But I want you to understand that we are suffering more and more...

RIVERA: But you will suffer more as a result of tonight than...

HAMDAN: Let me tell you, in one day -- in one day, 50 Palestinians were killed in (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

RIVERA: We weep for these Palestinians!

HAMDAN: What we...

RIVERA: We weep for the Palestinians who are killed! We weep for them! It's horrible!

HAMDAN: And of course...

RIVERA: But what you do is...

HAMDAN: And of course...

RIVERA: ... you make you make the people who kill them...

HAMDAN: And after -- and after...

RIVERA: ... feel like they're doing the right thing because you commit murder!

HAMDAN: And after weeping -- and after weeping, what happens? Sharon...

(CROSSTALK)

RIVERA: What happened? We support -- America supports the Security Council resolution that would give you a state...

HAMDAN: No one...

RIVERA: ... would give you a country...

HAMDAN: No one talk about Sharon...

RIVERA: ... that would give you a future! And now...

(CROSSTALK)

RIVERA: ... you kill 15 people!

HAMDAN: You are not asking. You are not asking.

RIVERA: I am, but I see too much!

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HAMDAN: You are not asking.

RIVERA: I see too much!

HAMDAN: You saw civilians...

RIVERA: I've seen as much as you have.

HAMDAN: You saw...

RIVERA: I've been there for 30 years!

HAMDAN: You saw civilians...

(CROSSTALK)

RIVERA: ... 30 years!

HAMDAN: You saw 73 houses destroyed in one night in (UNINTELLIGIBLE)? You saw that? You saw how they...

RIVERA: I said on television that what Israel did with those tanks in those towns was wrong. But what Israel did not do was go into a mosque and kill 50 people at random just because they were Muslim. They did not do that.

HAMDAN: They did that.

RIVERA: They did not.

HAMDAN: They did that in Hebron, in (UNINTELLIGIBLE) They did that, and the one who did that, Baruch Goldstein, now he's a saint in Israel.

RIVERA: Well, he's a sick man, too.

(CROSSTALK)

RIVERA: He's as sick as the people who (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

HAMDAN: OK, say that. Say that. That is...

(CROSSTALK)

HAMDAN: I will accept that from you.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

RIVERA: So Greta, you know, there's a lot of hatred. It's deep-seated. And I just think there is a disgusting, psychotic motivation in some of these people. And that's why I want a Palestine with a police force that can help crack down on these dogs, these pigs. I called him an animal. I'm sorry. I don't want to be emotional about it now. But it's just -- it shows how difficult this is, Greta.

VAN SUSTEREN: All right, Geraldo. Thanks a lot.

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Here with me in Washington is the chief representative for the Palestinian authority and PLO representative to the U.S., **Hasan Abdel Rahman**. Hasan, first of all, Hamas -- do you condemn the Hamas?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PLO SPOKESMAN: I condemn any violence.

VAN SUSTEREN: Do you condemn them? Tonight, they have claimed responsibility...

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: I condemn anyone who targets civilians, whether those civilians are innocent Israelis or innocent Palestinians.

VAN SUSTEREN: Then explain to me, if they take responsibility, if they say that "We're responsible for the Passover massacre," and if they take responsibility this evening for the four who were killed today, do you not then have to condemn Hamas?

RAHMAN: We do condemn their actions.

VAN SUSTEREN: But not them?

RAHMAN: But let me -- no, no. Those who are responsible, we condemn them. But you know, I am not going to get involved because Hamas is a very, very large organization. But whoever is involved in killing of civilians, whether it is Hamas, whether it is non-Hamas, whether it is the Israeli government, anyone who targets...

VAN SUSTEREN: Then why...

RAHMAN: ... civilians should be condemned. And you know, I hear double

standards. While I condemn Hamas for attacking those civilians, I don't see any Israeli condemning the Israeli army when they kill Palestinian civilians.

VAN SUSTEREN: What -- why is it that it took until today for Arafat to have a cease-fire, in light of the fact...

RAHMAN: No, no, no.

VAN SUSTEREN: I mean, today -- I mean, today he makes this statement...

RAHMAN: No, he has -- Yasser Arafat wanted to reach a cease-fire with the Israelis. But you have also to remember that the Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian territories is an act of violence. Do you think that the invasion of the Israeli army and the control of Israeli army of the Palestinians is not an act of violence?

VAN SUSTEREN: Well, it seems to me...

RAHMAN: How can we get rid of the original sin, and that is the occupation?

VAN SUSTEREN: I must tell you that I think an occupation is different from blowing up people.

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RAHMAN: Why?

VAN SUSTEREN: Well, because I think life is different than death. I'm not saying that I agree with an occupation.

RAHMAN: No, no, no. But is the occupation not killing Palestinians?

VAN SUSTEREN: I think anyone -- I start back to where you were in the beginning.

(CROSSTALK)

VAN SUSTEREN: I condemn -- I condemn the killing, too.

RAHMAN: How many Palestinians were killed by the Israeli army in the last 35 years?

VAN SUSTEREN: And well, there were a lot killed.

RAHMAN: Huh?

VAN SUSTEREN: There were a lot killed.

RAHMAN: Yes. So...

VAN SUSTEREN: I understand that.

RAHMAN: ... don't you condemn the Israeli army for killing Palestinians?

VAN SUSTEREN: I condemn any civilians who are killed.

RAHMAN: Of course! So since Zinni arrived into the Palestinian territories in the last two weeks, there were 31 Palestinians killed, mostly civilians, 4 years old girl...

VAN SUSTEREN: Before we run out of time, let me ask you something.

RAHMAN: Yes?

VAN SUSTEREN: Can Arafat shut down the violence from Hamas? Does he have control over Hamas?

RAHMAN: Under the present circumstances, no Palestinians have control. You know why? Because you have 40,000 Israeli soldiers, 500 tanks controlling the Palestinian territories. And Yasser Arafat is a prisoner in his own home and...

VAN SUSTEREN: Could he -- could he stop the violence by Hamas?

RAHMAN: If he is allowed to. But if you have the Israeli army controlling the Palestinians and making the life of the Palestinians impossible and targeting his own security forces, Yasser Arafat has no way to control anybody. Get the Israelis out of the Palestinian territories. Let's rebuild the Palestinian police, and Yasser Arafat will be in control.

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VAN SUSTEREN: All right, Hasan, thank you very much for joining me this evening.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

VAN SUSTEREN: Up next: You won't believe this story from the ivory tower, some scholars arguing that it's not always bad for adults to have sex with adolescents. Also ahead: The U.S. seeks death for the so-called 20th hijacker. We're going to debate that when we come back.

(NEWS BREAK)

LOAD-DATE: July 10, 2003

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SHOW: America At War

March 28, 2002, Thursday AM ET

NETWORK: MSNBC Cable Programming

MEDIUM: Cable

LENGTH: 89 words

BODY:

START: 09.56

Mideast Crisis. Where does the prospects of peace go from here? 20 people were killed in a suicide bombing in Israel yesterday.

Studio Interview - **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Chief Representative, PNA, says this is a region where those tragic situations happen. He says we have to look at the conditions created by the aggressive and brutal Israeli occupation that pushes suicide bombers to desperation.

Visual - Park Hotel. He says the idea of attacking civilians is repulsive.

Visual - Yassar Arafat.

END: 14.33

SEGMENT-ID: 7

PROGRAM-ID: msnbc0900.0328.7

LOAD-DATE: May 2, 2002

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National Public Radio (NPR)

SHOW: Talk of the Nation (2:00 PM ET) - NPR

March 27, 2002 Wednesday

LENGTH: 7727 words

HEADLINE: Arab League summit

ANCHORS: NEAL CONAN

BODY:

NEAL CONAN, host:

This is TALK OF THE NATION. I'm Neal Conan in Washington.

Today on TALK OF THE NATION, a look at what's being debated and discussed at the Arab summit in Beirut. The best possible case called for a cease-fire agreement between the Palestinians and Israel, then a unified Arab summit meeting in Beirut to endorse the land-for-peace proposal put forward by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah. On this first day of the Arab summit, the crown prince has indeed put his ideas on the table, but that is about all that has gone according to plan. There is no agreement on a cease-fire. Walkouts and no-shows have dominated the Arab summit. And the violence continues. Just a

couple of hours ago, an explosion in the crowded lobby of a resort hotel in Israel as people prepared to celebrate Passover.

Crown Prince Abdullah proposed that the entire Arab world offer Israel normal relations and security in exchange for full withdrawal from Arab lands held since 1967, establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a right of return for Palestinian refugees. Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat welcomed the Saudi peace plan, but his statement was overshadowed by a dispute with summit host Lebanon. However, Israel's response was lukewarm. The offer of normal relations is too vague, officials said. An adviser to Prime Minister Sharon said the demand for the right to return is totally unacceptable. And, again, those comments were made before news of this most-recent bombing in Israel.

Is the Arab summit unraveling in front of the world's eyes? This hour, we'll talk with diplomats from Jordan, the PLO and Israel. We'll also talk to former American diplomats for their take on the talks. To get in on the conversation, give us a phone call. Our number in Washington is (800) 989-8255. That's (800) 989-TALK. Our e-mail address is totn@npr.org.

Joining us now is Scott MacLeod, the Middle East correspondent for Time
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Magazine. He's in Lebanon covering the Arab League summit, and he joins us now from Beirut.

Scott, good to talk to you again.

Mr. SCOTT MacLEOD (Time Magazine): Hi, Neal.

CONAN: First off, this news of the explosion in Israel. It is, I guess, a little early for reaction as yet, but I'm wondering what the mood--Has this affected the talks or the mood in Beirut?

Mr. MacLEOD: It won't have much effect on the summit itself. This has become pretty routine in the last few months, and we've now seen, I think it's 18 months of intifada and clashes between Israel and the Palestinians. And so this is somewhat expected actually. And there is no cease-fire, and the summit--at least the moving forces, the driving forces in the summit are trying to put a stop to this kind of thing.

CONAN: So on this opening day that began, I guess, with a lot of hopes, what happened?

Mr. MacLEOD: Well, Arab summits have almost traditionally been theaters and scenes of drama, beauty contests, you know, whatever you want to call it. But I think that perhaps some of the media's putting too much emphasis on the chaos of the summit. Prince Abdullah came with his initiative. He proposed it very starkly, very clearly. He didn't backtrack from what he had been putting out through these newspapers interviews and so forth. And the summit will vote on it tomorrow. Everyone's expecting that it will be approved. And this will be---the Saudis are touting this as a historic moment. Most of the Arab diplomats here agree with that. And I tend to agree with it, as well. I think that for a variety of reasons, the Arabs are opening a new chapter in efforts to bring peace to the region. And we shouldn't be too sidetracked by the theatrics.

CONAN: Well, if you'll allow me, some of the theatrics included an apparent shot by the new president of Syria at Egypt and Jordan, their leaders, President Mubarak and King Abdullah. They did not come to Beirut.

Mr. MacLEOD: No, that's correct. And one of the big problems in the Arab world is disunity. It's one of the reasons that there are so many problems, and perhaps it's one of the reasons that the Palestinian-Israeli problem has lasted as long as it has. There's a lot of rivalry. There's a lot of jealousy. It's

a pretty pathetic state of affairs. What really is going to count, to my mind, in the end is what's in the resolution and whether it's voted or not. But definitely, I mean, President Mubarak's absence here came as a big shock to many people, and is clearly, let's say, reducing some of the impact that the Abdullah initiative would have had if, let's say, all 22 heads of state had been here. But, as I say, at the end of the day, it's going to be important what the initiative says and whether they vote for it or not, which everyone now expects that they will.

For example, you know, this is the first time, I believe, that an Arab leader, and certainly a Saudi leader, a leader from the land of the two holy mosques of Islam, has come to an Arab summit at a moment when Palestinians are

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still fighting the Israelis on the street in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and even in Netanya today, and made an appeal, reached across the border to the Israeli people and called for them to join the Arabs in peace. This is a very conciliatory gesture on the crown prince's part. And I think that this is the kind of tone that certainly the Saudis are trying to project and will be emanating from the summit, you know, in the adoption of the resolution.

CONAN: So you do expect them to vote on that, and I guess it's impossible to say, without knowing what's in the resolution, how many Arab states might vote for it.

Mr. MacLEOD: My understanding is that they have a prior agreement to vote by acclamation. So probably--the Libyan foreign minister told me he's not in favor of the resolution. The Iraqis--it's not clear where they're going to go. But there's going to be a vote, as I understand it, by acclamation. So even if there are objections here and there, the summit will record that the resolution or the initiative of Prince Abdullah was adopted by acclamation and, more or less, you know, by, you know, a consensus or a unanimity.

CONAN: Well, Scott MacLeod, thanks very much for speaking with us today.

Mr. MacLEOD: You're welcome.

CONAN: Scott MacLeod, the Middle East correspondent for Time Magazine, speaking with us from Beirut, the capital of Lebanon and the site of the Arab League summit, which is in its first day in that city.

Joining us now is Jafar Hassan, charge d'affaires of the Jordanian Embassy here in Washington, DC. And he's speaking to us on the phone from his office in Washington. We should explain that there is, at the moment, no Jordanian ambassador in Washington, so Mr. Hassan is the leading Jordanian diplomat in Washington at the moment.

And, welcome to TALK OF THE NATION, sir.

Mr. JAFAR HASSAN (Charge D'Affaires, Jordanian Embassy): Thank you, sir. It's my pleasure.

CONAN: Can you tell us why King Abdullah decided not to go to Beirut?

Mr. HASSAN: Well, his decision should not be construed for any political reasons. I don't have any specific details, but it should definitely not be construed as a political message. Jordan supports fully the Saudi initiative, and has worked very actively in trying to get it through the Arab League summit. And hopefully this initiative will pass through by tomorrow.

CONAN: Jordan, of course, along with Egypt, the two Arab states that have full relations with Israel; I guess, in addition, Mauritania. And one of the speakers at the Arab summit today was the president of Syria, and asked when he might see the states that do have relations with Israel cut those ties.

Mr. HASSAN: Sir, we are not looking now at cutting ties. The exact opposite is happening. The Saudi initiative aims to reach out to the Israeli people, to

tell the Israeli people that this is not the way things have to be. The
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absolutely deplorable explosion that occurred, the terrorist act that occurred a few minutes ago in Israel only underlines that we should get both parties out of this trap of savagery that they have gotten themselves into. And therefore the Saudi initiative aims to give the Israeli people an alternative, a hope that not only we will give--the Arab states will give security guarantees, but also extends peaceful coexistence and normalcy in the future between all states in the region. That's why it is extremely important and it's extremely essential--it's not a drama or a beauty contest. On the contrary, it is a message, a very important message from the highest possible forum of all Arab leaders.

CONAN: I don't mean to harp on this, but on what you're describing as an historic day then, and tomorrow what will be an historic vote at the Arab League summit, why the king of Jordan would not want to be there.

Mr. HASSAN: Well, sir, the prime minister is there, and it would have been extremely important on such a historic date that the Israeli government would at least reciprocate on the importance of this meeting. Unfortunately, the Israeli government seems to persist on humiliating the Palestinian leadership. And this definitely does not work. We have to enable the Palestinian leadership to take action. We have to enable it by giving it the political tools with which it can act forcefully. It is very unfortunate and very saddening that until the very last moment the conditions and the humiliation that were placed on Arafat had to be kept by the Israelis. And we would have very much liked to see the contrary.

CONAN: Our telephone number here is (800) 989-8255. That's (800) 989-TALK. Our e-mail address is totn@npr.org. And let's go take a phone call. And our first caller is Ethan, who joins us from Clayton, California.

ETHAN (Caller): Oh, hello, Neal.

CONAN: Hi.

ETHAN: I have a question about the right of return. I'm not certain as to what's meant by that. Is this a right of return of Palestinians to the Palestinian-controlled areas, or right of return to anywhere in Israel whether it's Palestinian-controlled or Israeli-controlled.

CONAN: Jafar Hassan, a Jordanian diplomat, can you explain what your belief is about this call for the right to return?

Mr. HASSAN: Well, the call for the right of return as it would--is basically related to the issue of return of Palestinian refugees. And that's an issue that I believe in the final form of the initiative is still unclear. But it would be dependent on an agreed and just settlement to the refugees' problems, as negotiated by the concerned parties. So it would definitely be subject to final status talks and to a final settlement between Palestinians and Israelis.

It's one of the difficult issues, but it's not one of the absolutely unresolvable issues. It can be resolved, but the issue is to get them on the track in that political process that could talk about final settlement.

Unfortunately, right now we are not able to do that, and we really need to start talking about the political issues, because this is really the source of insecurity. The violence is because of the political conditions that actually create this violence. And it has to be resolved on both stages.

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CONAN: Ethan, thanks very much for the phone call.

I wanted to ask you, Mr. Hassan, the issue of refugees is obviously important to Jordan, but--we just have a minute left in this segment, and I know you have

to go--where do you see this process going from tomorrow's vote? If indeed the Arab summit does endorse the Saudi peace plan, what's the next step?

Mr. HASSAN: The next step, sir, would be to engage both parties on the ground, achieve a cease-fire, and achieving a cease-fire would also mean having a political process to look towards. You cannot achieve a cease-fire if you don't have a parallel political process to maintain the cease-fire. If there are no peace talks, a cease-fire will not be a lasting one. Therefore, both issues go together hand in hand, security and the political process and peace talks. And I hope that General Zinni will be able to work out some sort of agreement between both parties as soon as possible. We don't have time to waste, and we don't have the luxury of waiting under these circumstances.

CONAN: Jafar Hassan, thanks very much for speaking with us.

Mr. HASSAN: Thank you.

CONAN: Jafar Hassan is the charge d'affaires at the Jordanian Embassy here in Washington, DC, and he spoke to us by phone from his office.

We're talking about the Arab League summit in Beirut and what we can expect after some of the key players refuse to attend. Are we in for more violence? An explosion today in Israel. Coming up, representatives of both the PLO and Israel. It's TALK OF THE NATION from NPR News.

(Soundbite of music)

CONAN: This is TALK OF THE NATION. I'm Neal Conan in Washington.

This hour, we're talking about the Arab League summit in Beirut and the problems that are diminishing hopes for an agreement and a united Arab peace initiative, though that may still be possible, at least to conversations that we've had with diplomats here in Washington and with a reporter in Beirut earlier today. Is a new consensus among Arab states possible now? You're invited to join this discussion. Our phone number is (800) 989-8255. That's (800) 989-TALK. Our e-mail address, totn@npr.org.

In a few moments, we'll speak with Mark Regev, a spokesman for the Israeli Embassy here in Washington. But joining us now is **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, representative of the PLO in Washington, DC. Chief representative; excuse me. And he joins us from his office. And, welcome.

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (PLO Chief Representative in Washington, DC): Thank you.

CONAN: First of all, I was wondering if you could give us a response, a reaction to the news of the bombing in Israel just a couple of hours ago.

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, I don't have all the information, but as a matter of principle, we've always opposed any violence against civilians. In fact,

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President Arafat today in his speech to the Arab summit conference made the same point. He said, 'We are opposed, we are against any attacks against civilians, whether those civilians are Palestinians or Israelis. They should stay out of this conflict.' And, of course, he described the suffering and the pain that the Palestinian people are enduring, all of them, without exception, 3.5 million, at the hands of the Israeli illegal military occupiers.

CONAN: You mentioned Mr. Arafat's speech. Of course, the speech was made on Al-Jazeera television. It was not made to the Arab summit. Can you tell us what happened? There was supposed to be a...

Mr. RAHMAN: No, I think there was a mistake committed. But it was at Al-Jazeera and it would be replayed to the summit in a later session.

CONAN: Well, the...

Mr. RAHMAN: But anyway...

CONAN: ...Palestinian delegation walked out of the summit.

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, again, as I said, we should not exaggerate what happened. I think they are back, or they will be back, into the meetings, and things have been settled. There's not a problem, and I don't think it deserves much more attention than what happened.

CONAN: You're speaking to us from Washington, DC.

Mr. RAHMAN: Correct.

CONAN: Any reason we should be alarmed about all those sirens we're hearing on the phone?

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, I don't know. Unfortunately, there's some fire cars passing by. But it's OK.

CONAN: OK. Nothing to be alarmed about.

Mr. RAHMAN: No, no, no.

CONAN: OK. And if you wouldn't mind taking a phone call with us?

Mr. RAHMAN: No, absolutely not.

CONAN: OK. Why don't we go now to Aiyub(ph), who joins us from Minneapolis, Minnesota.

AIYUB (Caller): Hello, Neal.

CONAN: Hello. You're on the air.

AIYUB: Yes, sir. I'm a Palestinian. First, I have a comment. Now the peace process that are to be finalized, it's got to give a dignity to the Palestinians, as well as the Israelis. The Israeli position so far is that they'll make a peace in which they will feel as if they are in control of the

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destiny of everything. And look at the Barak plan that was sponsored by the Clinton administration in 2000. Basically it says to the Palestinian, we'll give you a land that you're going to call a state. It's a purchase of land. You don't have control over your border. You don't have control over your natural resources--the water, the sky. And then you don't have a foothold--you don't have control over your capital, which is East Jerusalem. And then (technical difficulties) this is great. You know, it's a concession. What kind of concession you call this? And my question is posed to the Israeli representative.

CONAN: And--I'm sorry?

AIYUB: My question goes to the Israeli representative on the panel.

CONAN: Well, he's not here with is as yet. Do you have a question for the Palestinian representative on the panel?

AIYUB: And there is also one more question, also. It's the issue of the right of return. Who has the say of someone who was from that land, who was born there, who has the key to his house and he knows his farm, not to go back to his land, yet any person who haven't embraced the Judaism religion can't go and entitled to live in that land and become a citizen?

CONAN: Well, thanks very much for the phone call.

AIYUB: Thank you.

CONAN: And we'll put that to **Hasan Abdel Rahman**. The right of return--How do you understand it? Is it clear in the presentation that we've heard from the crown prince of Saudi Arabia earlier today?

Mr. RAHMAN: I think the caller is correct in asking the question why it is possible for any Jew who is born anywhere in the world, or who at least claims to be Jewish, to have the right and come and settle, become a citizen upon arriving, and those who are born in the country, whose fathers were born there, whose great-grandfathers were born there, they are denied this right? It is a very important question that many around the world, especially Palestinians, ask us.

Now as far as the question of the refugees is concerned, there has to be a fair and realistic solution to the refugee problem. The refugee problem is at the core of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and I believe that there is consensus on this issue, including--I'm using, in fact, the same expression that was used by Secretary Colin Powell in his speech on November 16th, when he said that, of course, what is needed is for Israel to end its illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories. Israel should stop its humiliation of the Palestinians. Palestinians should have the right to live as a free nation, exercise their right to self-determination in a state of their own on the West Bank and Gaza. This is an international concern. And he added that a just and realistic solution for the Palestinian problem should be found.

And, of course, this is a subject of discussions between us and the Israelis, but the Israelis cannot, under any circumstances, expect that they will brush under the carpet the issue of the Palestinian refugees. And we've been engaged

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in discussions with the Israelis over the issue of the refugees. And in the context of a peace settlement between the Palestinians and Israelis, there has to be a just solution for the refugee problem.

CONAN: I'm going to ask you the same question I put earlier to the Jordanian charge d'affaires: If the Arab summit agrees to this Saudi peace plan tomorrow, what do you believe would be the next step?

Mr. RAHMAN: In fact, I believe even today that there is a consensus on the Saudi peace plan, because the Saudi peace plan is based on what the Arabs have accepted in the past. It added a new dimension. The Arabs have agreed to establish peace with Israel on the basis of return of all the occupied Arab territories that were--including East Jerusalem, of course the Golan Heights and what is left in South Lebanon. In exchange, the Arab world will establish normal relations with Israel.

CONAN: Yes.

Mr. RAHMAN: I think that there is a consensus. Of course, there are rhetorical positions, but this is the essence of the Arab position that coincides with the international consensus.

Now this is really the question that the Arab world will pose to the United States and to the United Nations: What is the mechanism to translate this into a reality? So far, we have not had an acceptance by Israel for this position.

What we have is generalities that seem to want to obscure the real issues.

So I think the ball now is in the Israeli court after the adoption of this very courageous and enlightened peace initiative; will be in the American court, in the Bush administration's court and in the Israeli court. And they have to respond to this very courageous, very important and historic initiative by the Arab League.

CONAN: Well, thank you very much for speaking with us today.

Mr. RAHMAN: Thank you, sir.

CONAN: **Hasan Abdel Rahman** is the chief Washington representative of the PLO. And he spoke to us on the phone from his office here in Washington.

This evening at sundown marks the beginning of Passover, and joining us now from his office in Washington, DC, is Mark Regev, the spokesman for the Israeli Embassy. And first of all, I wanted to say welcome and thank you for taking the time to speak with us just before the holiday, and also I know many people will be deeply concerned about the casualties in the bombing earlier today.

Mr. MARK REGEV (Spokesman, Israeli Embassy): Yes. You're right about that and thank you for the condolences. Apparently, we're talking about some 15-plus dead and scores of injured. You know, it's the holidays now in Israel. They're

seven hours ahead of us, and people were going into a hotel where they have the traditional Passover meal, and a suicide bomber came in and blew himself up. And we don't have final results of the casualties, of the dead and the injured yet. We're going to probably take a few more hours. But it's not a good day. I can see now on my wire screen, unfortunately, the Al Aqsa organization has taken

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responsibility. I would remind you that the Al Aqsa organization is part of Fatah, which is part of Arafat's organization.

CONAN: And just put today on the list of terrorist organizations by Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Mr. REGEV: Correct. And I think this is a fundamental problem that the Israelis are having, is that I heard my colleague, Mr. Rahman, on before me, and he talks nicely about peace, and he's one part of the PA infrastructure, one part of Mr. Arafat's organization. But on the other hand, another part of that organization, in the Fatah military wing, Al Aqsa is doing these suicide bombings, and the question is, who is the real Mr. Arafat? I sit Mr. Rahman, who is speaking peace in Washington, or is it these murderers who are funded and a part of his organization?

CONAN: The explosion came, I guess, just a couple of hours after President Bush said on a campaign swing that he thought a cease-fire agreement was close. It's being brokered by General Zinni, the US delegate envoy over there. Is a cease-fire agreement still possible now or has this explosion changed things?

Mr. REGEV: I hope it's still possible. I know that ever since General Zinni arrived in the region, we've been making a maximum effort to facilitate a cease-fire. We were working very hard and continue to work to make that happen. But there is a feeling in my gut and then in my country that Arafat doesn't want to make it work. And it's a pity, because it's just a few years ago that we saw him as a partner in peace. I remember the historic handshake between him and Prime Minister Rabin. I remember the Camp David summit where we were negotiating with this man in the hopes that we could have a peace agreement.

But over the last few months, I think public opinion and government opinion in Israel has changed, that we're not convinced that Arafat really wants peace. We're not convinced that he wants a deal. And it's a sad realization that may be on the other side of the line, we have a partner that wants to continue a struggle of violence and doesn't want a fair compromise.

CONAN: You're listening to TALK OF THE NATION from NPR News. And if this agreement, if this Saudi peace plan is endorsed by the Arab League summit tomorrow in its vote by acclamation, if what we're hearing is accurate, is that an important step? Where does it go from there?

Mr. REGEV: Well, we were very, very positive about what Crown Prince Abdullah said. You know, he talked about full peace and normalization of relations with Israel, and Israelis were very agreeable to that, especially coming from Saudi Arabia, from a conservative, Muslim and important Arab state, for them to talk about peace and normalization at this typical time, it was a real breath of fresh air, I would say, especially if you consider the amount of hatred, unfortunately, anti-Israel and even anti-Semitism that you see spewed out, unfortunately, in the Arab media and in the Arab world.

I think, though, if you look carefully at the resolutions of this Arab summit, and we're only looking at drafts now because the final resolutions, as you say, quite rightly, will only be taken tomorrow, but it's been watered down so much. And the problem is that the Arab League is an organization of 22 countries, and it works on a consensus politics, and to get a consensus that

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 also includes countries like Syria and Lebanon and some of the other more radical countries let's leave out for this time, Libya and Iraq, but to get a consensus, you have to water it down and make it in a way that takes out the spirit of the original Abdullah initiative. So they're no longer talking about normalization. They're talking about normal correct relations, a more cold legal term. They are not, unfortunately, talking about 242 and 338. They talk about June 4 borders. That's why the Camp David summit blew up last year--sorry, two years ago--why we didn't get an agreement, because there wasn't, unfortunately, enough Arab flexibility to match the flexibility the Israelis put on the table.
 CONAN: 242 and 338, of course, the UN...

Mr. REGEV: Correct.

CONAN: ...Security Council resolutions, almost historical documents at this point.

Mr. REGEV: And could I ask as a question, I'd like to throw it out. I mean, is it too much for an Israeli to expect at an Arab League summit, that someone would come out and say, 'Suicide bombing is bad, it's evil, it doesn't represent Arab interests'? And on the contrary, you don't get a statement like that. And it's difficult for me to understand how you've got 22 states being represented, admittedly not all at the highest level because a lot of serious Arab leaders decided to stay away, but...

CONAN: The...

Mr. REGEV: ...is it too much to expect that they say 'Suicide bombings is something that we disapprove of'?

CONAN: Well, earlier, we heard from Jaffar Hassan, the charge d'affaires of Jordan, and he said exactly that.

Mr. REGEV: No. Yes. And I think the Jordanians play a marvelous role. The Jordanians and the Egyptians, both whose leaders have stayed away, but unfortunately, I talked about an Arab consensus, about the need to keep every one of a 22-state coalition happy, and it's not part of the resolutions.

CONAN: Let's see if we can get a quick phone call in before you have to leave. Our caller is Michael, who joins us from Ann Arbor, Michigan.

MICHAEL (Caller): Hello, Neal. Thank you for having me. I have a quick question for the ambassador. I do completely understand that you are unable to tell whether Arafat is a terrorist or is a partner for peace, but in terms of how the Palestinians feel, how can they feel confident that Sharon is a partner for peace when he, as the government and the leader of Israeli army, is responsible for the deaths of, you know, over 30, 40 innocent Palestinians in refugee camps in Jenin and Jalalabad and other places in the West Bank?

CONAN: I'll just explain that, Mr. Regev, we just have about a minute left.

Mr. REGEV: That's not a problem. I think there's a lot of, especially in the Arab world, of painting Mr. Sharon with one brush. I'd remind the listener and all the listeners that Prime Minister Sharon played an instrumental role in the

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 peace treaty with Egypt. He was the one that took out the settlements that were in northern Sinai, so we could have peace with Egypt. With peace with Jordan, he played a vital role, especially in the water agreement where we share water supplies with the Jordanians, and even in negotiating with the Palestinians. At the Wye Peace Conference, he played a very important role. So I think the Palestinians and the Arabs know that Sharon is a serious man, and for a serious peace, for a real peace, he's willing to take some steps. It was only a few weeks ago at the White House, he spoke publicly about his acceptance of a Palestinian state.

CONAN: Michael, I'm afraid that's all the time we have, so we'll have to leave it there. Thanks very much for the call. And I think Mike inadvertently promoted you, Mark Regev. You are a spokesman for the Israeli Embassy and not yet ambassador. But we...

Mr. REGEV: Well, I don't think I will be, and it was nice anyway. My mother would have liked to have heard that.

CONAN: Well, again, thank you for speaking with us today, especially just before Passover begins.

Mr. REGEV: Thank you.

CONAN: You're listening to TALK OF THE NATION from NPR News.
(Announcements)

CONAN: This is TALK OF THE NATION. I'm Neal Conan in Washington. Tomorrow, we'll talk baseball. Opening day is just around the corner. After last year's dramatic World Series, what should we look forward to this year? There's still talk of a strike and contraction. We'll have sports reporters from around the country tell us what and who they'll be watching for. That's tomorrow on TALK OF THE NATION.

Today we're talking about the Arab summit in Beirut. And joining us now to look at where the United States can go from here are Robert Malley, a former special assistant to President Clinton for Arab-Israeli affairs. He's presently the director of the Middle East Program at the International Crisis Group here in Washington, DC.

And welcome to you.

Mr. ROBERT MALLEY (International Crisis Group): Thank you.

CONAN: Also with us, Ed Walker, president of the Middle East Institute in Washington, formerly assistant secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs under Presidents Clinton and Bush.

And, Ed Walker, welcome back to the program.

Mr. ED WALKER (Middle East Institute): Well, thanks very much.

CONAN: Wanted to get your reaction to the events today. Well, I guess we
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have to begin--there's no way to avoid tying the events in Beirut to the explosion in Israel, or, Robert Malley can these things operate on separate tracks?

Mr. MALLEY: Well, in a way, today was really, in a nutshell, you see everything about all the trends that are currently going on in the region. So there's a terrible act of terror in Netanya with the risk now of even greater escalation, as I think the Israelis are going to take retaliatory action.

There's a spectacle of inter-Arab division at the Arab League that you mentioned earlier in the program. There's the United States that's playing a balancing act. They welcome the Saudi initiative, but they don't seem to be doing anything with it. Vice President Cheney didn't meet with Arafat, but they wanted Sharon to let Arafat go to the summit, so the Americans, the administration doesn't quite seem to know what it wants to do, and that's on display today. And then finally, with the speech of the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, a ray of hope perhaps, which does seem disconnected a little bit with everything else I've been mentioning. But I think that sets a full picture of what we're dealing with right now in the region.

CONAN: Ed Walker.

Mr. WALKER: Yeah. Well, Rob's got it pretty much down. I think that the administration not only hasn't decided what--it doesn't know what to do. I think that's one of the real problems here. And there's still a question mark in I think many people's minds just how committed the administration is at the

top levels to making an all-out effort to try and bring this violence to a close. I think a lot of people interpreted the most recent actions as related to what Vice President Cheney was trying to do in the war on terrorism and the possible efforts to overturn Saddam Hussein. So I don't know yet whether we have a full commitment from the administration to really roll up their sleeves and do something about this terrible situation that's costing the lives of so many people.

CONAN: Robert Malley, Ed Walker just mentioned Iraq and Saddam Hussein, and that issue sort of is the backdrop to all of this. Vice President Cheney, on his trip through the region, was hoping to rally support in the Arab world for some sort of US action against Iraq. Where does all of this leave that?

Mr. MALLEY: Well, it's the backdrop perhaps in the United States. I think in the Arab world--I just came back from there--they don't want to really talk about Iraq, other than to say, 'Don't deal with it. Don't deal with it until you've dealt with and unless you've dealt with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,' which is really the priority in all of their minds, and I think everyone is predicting that things are going to get much worse now unless something major happens, and something major that's going to happen will only come from Washington at this point. And I think it has to be something very different, perhaps more risky than what's been done so far. But to talk about Iraq right now to an Arab public is really disconnected from where their minds are at.

CONAN: Ed Walker, given all of that, General Zinni's task at the moment seems enormous.

Mr. WALKER: Yeah, it is enor...

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(Soundbite of telephone dialing)

Mr. WALKER: Hello? Hello?

CONAN: Yes, we're still here.

Mr. WALKER: OK. Yeah. It is enormous. And I think that it's not the kind of thing that he's going to be able to do on his own or with the tools that he's been handed. It's going to take more than Tony, who is an extraordinary man, but he can't do it alone. He needs to have the president weighing in here with both the parties continuing to push them to back away from the breach. And I'm afraid that we're just moving in the absolute wrong direction.

(Soundbite of telephone dialing)

CONAN: Well, we hope whoever's trying to dial out on your phone stops it. It sounds like a computer of some sort. But anyway, let's see if we can get our listeners involved. And again, our phone number is (800) 989-TALK. Our e-mail address, totn@npr.org. And our first caller is Nicole, who's with us from Watertown, New York.

NICOLE (Caller): Yes. Hi. Can you hear me?

CONAN: Yes. You're on the air.

NICOLE: I have a question concerning the depiction of the Palestinians in the US vs. Europe. I travel to Europe quite extensively, and I've noticed that in the US, everything seems to be geared pro-Israeli, where the Palestinians are depicted as terrorists almost. And in Europe, it's exactly the opposite, where the Palestinians are viewed as victimized and degraded and just lashing out, trying to get some grasp back on what they once had. Where does the disparity come from in those two views?

CONAN: Robert Malley.

Mr. MALLEY: Well, it is interesting. I lived much of my childhood in Europe, and it's true that the depiction of the struggle between Israel and the

Palestinians there is very different from the one it is here. I think it has to do with the United States' long-standing connection to Israel on moral, strategic, political and other grounds. And in Europe, its own history with the Arab world with colonialism and other parts of its past, which makes it look at the Palestinians in a very different light. There's been some closing of the gap, I think, over the last few years, I think, in Europe, a greater understanding of Israel's security concerns, and in the United States, a greater understanding of the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people. But there's no doubt that when you speak to either officials or the media or people in both countries, there's still a gap that remains.

CONAN: Nicole, was there one thing in particular that jumped out at you?

NICOLE: No. I really noticed how everything over in Europe just seems to understand the Palestinians so much more than they even are considered here.

CONAN: Did they seem to you to understand the Israelis?

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NICOLE: Yeah. Not as much as they are understood here. It seems like--I don't know if it's just the huge Jewish population that's in the US that strengthens that link to Israeli government, but it does seem to be very present in Europe, and you cannot miss it if you speak to somebody.

CONAN: OK. Well...

NICOLE: It's very skewed.

CONAN: ...thanks very much for the observation and for the call.

NICOLE: Thank you.

CONAN: Let's go now to Hank, who's on the line with us now from Louisville, Kentucky.

HANK (Caller): Yes. What is your best guess as to how America will respond to a so-called right of return and the movement back to the '67 boundaries, since both of them would render Israel implausible as a state? Is this a negotiating position or simply something that the Arabs are declaring and that will just require minor modifications?

CONAN: Ed Walker, you and your dialing telephone.

Mr. WALKER: Yeah. Sorry about this. The...

CONAN: That's all right. We don't think you did it on purpose.

Mr. WALKER: Yeah. The real problem here is that I don't see how we can get a solution unless it's along the lines of something close to what...

(Soundbite of telephone dialing)

Mr. WALKER: ...Praba(ph) was, and I think that the real problem is that the Israelis are going to have to believe a little bit more than they certainly have reason to believe that the Palestinians and the Arabs want to have peace with them. That was a very important part of Crown Prince Abdullah's statement, was that he was promising peace in the future. Right now, I don't see that the Israelis have much reason to believe that...

(Soundbite of telephone dialing)

Mr. WALKER: ...when it comes to what the Palestinians have been saying and what they've been doing. So if that conviction is there, then it may well be possible to move towards a Taba-like(ph) solution.

HANK: May I ask another question?

CONAN: Sure, go ahead.

HANK: Yeah. Of course, no state would take another state or particularly 22 states' word for it that somehow they're going to adopt peace after more than 50 years of hostility. That, indeed, makes the prognosis very bleak, and it seems to me the Arabs are going to have to bend on this requisite, both of right of

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return and on '67 boundaries. They're going to have to be as flexible about this as the Israelis are supposed to be.

CONAN: Robert Malley, your reaction to that?

Mr. MALLEY: Well, I mean, I think the main point that one has to bear in mind, too, that certainly the position that was presented by the crown prince is not the last word. I think what is needed now is a third party, because the Arabs obviously have a certain bias, and the third party has to be the United States, and we could talk all we want about a cease-fire and the end of the violence.

At the end of the day, this is a political problem that will be resolved through a political solution, and that political solution, in my estimation, will come from the United States and other countries allied and backing the United States, and it'll be one that will take into account the Arab request for return to the land to the line of '67. There could be land swaps. That was a concept that was endorsed by the Israelis and the Palestinians at Camp David and in later negotiations so that the borders of Israel will be secure, but the Palestinians feel that they get the land back. And on the return of refugees, one has to find a solution that responds to the need that the Palestinians have to recognize that an injustice was done to them in 1948, but that also responds to the Israeli need to know that the Jewish character of the state of Israel will be preserved.

But only a third party could come up with an idea that will meet the needs of both sides, and again, I think right now, we could play all we want with the Tenet plan, the security work plan to try to stop the violence between the two sides. None of it will work and all of it will be a sideshow until one gets to the root of the problem.

CONAN: Hank, thanks very much for the call.

HANK: Thank you.

CONAN: You're listening to TALK OF THE NATION from NPR News. And our next caller is Johnny, who joins us on the line from Kaiserslautern in Germany.

JOHNNY (Caller): Thank you, Neal.

CONAN: Sure.

JOHNNY: I need to ask someone, anyone, how one nation's leader can deny another nation's leader the right to attend a religious service, how one nation's leader can deny another nation's leader free travel...

CONAN: And...

JOHNNY: ...how they can deny him the right to appear on television? How long can this go on? You can't humiliate peace.

CONAN: I'm just saying you're referring to Israel's ban, first of all, on
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travel by Yasser Arafat, who was kept at his offices in Ramallah and not allowed to go to Beirut to attend the Arab summit.

JOHNNY: Yes, sir.

CONAN: OK. Ed Walker, are you with us?

Mr. WALKER: Yeah, I'm with you now.

CONAN: OK. I think we've got a better phone line.

Mr. WALKER: Right.

CONAN: Just wondered if you could answer Johnny's question?

Mr. WALKER: Well, the problem was that Sharon made a commitment or a statement some time ago about the conditions under which he would authorize or release Arafat and then let him come back.

JOHNNY: Release him as what...

Mr. WALKER: It was a mistake once he did it, but once having done it, then credibility sort of demands him to carry through. The fact is that Arafat didn't even begin to bring the violence under control, as we've seen today, and did not fulfill the conditions that Zinni had set and didn't answer the vice president, so...

JOHNNY: And, sir, with due respect to you, you haven't answered my question. By what moral ground can one nation's leader impose that kind of restriction on another nation's leader?

Mr. WALKER: Well, first of all, you don't have another nation. You have an occupied territory. And occupation rules are somewhat different than international rules. Now I'm not suggesting for a minute that the Israelis have lived up to their obligations under occupation. We've got the problem of settlements, which are certainly illegal under occupation. But the fact is we don't have two nations. That's what we're trying to get to.

JOHNNY: Sir, I don't think you focused on my question. By what right does one nation's leader have to hold another nation's leader hostage?

Mr. WALKER: I've just said, this is not another nation. It's very simple.

JOHNNY: You say that Palestine is not a nation?

Mr. WALKER: No, it's not, because it's not a recognized state. The whole purpose of all these negotiations is to get two states, so they can live in peace.

JOHNNY: If my memory serves me correctly, the Israelis weren't a state some years ago.

Mr. WALKER: That's right.

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JOHNNY: Did they quickly forget?

Mr. WALKER: Look, I thought you were making a legal argument. The fact is the legal situation is not...

JOHNNY: Legal or moral, sir.

Mr. WALKER: Well, moral arguments--I mean, you know, we've got immoral actions going on both sides every day.

JOHNNY: That's correct.

Mr. WALKER: We've got terrorists killing people in the streets, civilians, innocent. We've got people's houses being destroyed. Where is the morality in this whole thing?

JOHNNY: I would ask you that question, sir.

Mr. WALKER: No. I asked you.

JOHNNY: I'm...

CONAN: Well, I'm not sure that we're going to be able to resolve it in the minute and 45 seconds...

JOHNNY: Thank you, sir.

CONAN: ...we have left in the show. But, Johnny, thanks for the call.

JOHNNY: Thank you, sir.

CONAN: OK. Ed Walker, appreciate that. Wanted to get your thoughts, in the little time, both you and Robert Malley--you know, Robert Malley was not exactly optimistic about the outcome of this meeting in Beirut. What do you think?

Mr. WALKER: No. I don't think it's going to be a very optimistic outcome. The problem is under these conditions of violence, it's very hard for leaders to do anything but negative things. In some ways, it might be useful that the top leaders have not gone to this summit. It's not a summit which can lead to really terrifically productive results, and therefore, we don't want to necessarily be bound by all of the statements that will probably come out of

this summit.

CONAN: Robert Malley, the last 30 seconds are yours.

Mr. MALLEY: I agree with what Ed said. At the same time, I think one shouldn't underplay the significance of what's happening, the joint statement, a resolution that would be adopted by all Arab states saying that they're prepared to normalize relations with Israel, have Israel become a normal member of the region, in exchange for compromises and peace with Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians. It's not the final word. The final word would not be said in Beirut. It has to be said elsewhere; in particular, here. But I don't think one should dismiss it. One has to use it because it's a gesture that the Israelis in particular have been waiting for for a long time.

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CONAN: Robert Malley, thank you so much for joining us today.

Mr. MALLEY: Thank you.

CONAN: Robert Malley, formerly special assistant to President Clinton for Arab-Israeli affairs, director now of the Middle East Program at the International Crisis Group in Washington, DC, and he spoke to us from Washington.

Ed Walker, thanks to you.

Mr. WALKER: You bet. Thanks very much.

CONAN: Ed Walker is now president of the Middle East Institute.

In Washington, I'm Neal Conan, NPR News.

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CNN

SHOW: CNN CROSSFIRE 19:30

March 25, 2002 Monday

Transcript # 032500CN.V20

SECTION: News; Domestic

LENGTH: 3701 words

HEADLINE: Should Vice President Cheney Meet Yasser Arafat?; Why Do Some States
Want to Revive Death Tax?

GUESTS: Anthony Weiner, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Jon Kyl, Jon Corzine

BYLINE: Bill Press, Robert Novak

HIGHLIGHT:

Should Vice President Cheney meet with Yasser Arafat? And why are some states
are trying to make sure death and taxes continue to go hand in hand?

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE
UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DICK CHENEY, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Different factors, steps
are actually implemented, then at that point, I will be prepared to meet with
Mr. Arafat. To date, that hasn't happened and, therefore, there's no meeting

currently scheduled.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BILL PRESS, CO-HOST: Tonight, should Vice President Cheney meet with Yasser Arafat?

And, why are some states are trying to make sure death and taxes continue to go hand in hand?

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ANNOUNCER: From Washington, CROSSFIRE. On the left, Bill Press. On the right, Robert Novak. In the crossfire, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, chief Palestinian representative to the U.S.; and Democratic Congressman Anthony Weiner of New York. And later, Republican Senator Jon Kyl of Arizona and Democratic Senator Jon Corzine of New Jersey.

PRESS: It's CROSSFIRE, and thanks for joining us. Vice President Cheney has returned from the Middle East, but it didn't look like he'll be getting back on a plane any time soon. Latest word is that talked about meeting with Chairman Yasser Arafat won't take place after all, because, says Cheney, Arafat still hasn't done enough to stop the violence directed against Israelis.

At the same time, the United States is pressuring Israel to let Arafat out of his house arrest long enough to attend the Arab league summit in Beirut on Wednesday. The stakes are high because, strangely enough, chances for peace could very well hinge on both decisions. Should Cheney meet with Arafat? Should Israel let Arafat go to the summit? Bob Novak.

ROBERT NOVAK, CO-HOST: Congressman Weiner, I would like you to listen please to what I think is an extremely pithy analysis of the way the Israelis are treating Arafat given by the chief Palestinian negotiator, Mr. Erekat. Let's listen to it.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SAEB EREKAT, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: But for Mr. Sharon, he must make up his mind either to treat President Arafat as a president or as a prisoner. He cannot say at one day that he is irrelevant and on the other hand hold him accountable. It's just contradictory.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

NOVAK: Isn't that the situation, Congressman, that the Israelis are humiliating Arafat, treating him as a prisoner and then saying it's up to you, Mr. Arafat, to end this violence and to create the conditions for a cease-fire?

REP. ANTHONY WEINER (D), NEW YORK: Arafat and his charges have been responsible for 365 deaths in the last 18 months by terrorism. It is the equivalent of having 18,000 deaths here in the United States. And it's not groups far from him. It's the Tanziem (ph), it's 417. Even just this week a member of the Al Aqsa Brigade who was just released from prison by Arafat committed an act of suicide bombing. You know, it's funny to hear Saeb Erekat say that. If Arafat on one hand can't stop the violence, why negotiate with him? If he can stop the violence, he's not doing it, that makes him accountable.

NOVAK: Well, of course, you didn't answer my question of whether the -- or Mr. Erekat's about the question of the contradiction of treating him as a president or a prisoner. But I'd like to read to you what the United States secretary of state said while traveling in Latin America with President Bush. He said -- we'll put it up on the screen -- quote, "Vice President Cheney could go at a later time, that is go to meet Mr. Arafat. It doesn't have to be right away. The important point is that Chairman Arafat knows we want to engage him as we move forward."

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Now, Mr. Weiner, what the secretary of state is saying is that we want to meet with Arafat, at least conditions are being met. But aren't you one of the extreme pro-Israeli American lawmakers who says don't meet with him under any conditions?

WEINER: The way to be sure to get me reelected is to call me an extreme pro-Israeli lawmaker. But listen, General Zinni visited there in November. What happened when he hit the ground? Two terrible suicide bombings in the heart of Jerusalem right after the sabbath. And then Zinni says I'm not going back until the violence ends. What happens? Zinni went back. What happened the last couple of days? Look, it is clear...

NOVAK: You're saying he shouldn't meet with him under any conditions, is that right?

WEINER: I'm saying that, frankly, he is, for all intensive purposes, we should treat him the same way we should treat Mullah Omar. Someone responsible for terrorism should be treated like a terrorist. You asked a hypothetical question. Is he a president or a prisoner? He should be a prisoner. The guy has committed crimes.

PRESS: Mr. Rahman, I want to disassociate myself from the last remark, but I do want to say I certainly believe that Vice President Cheney should meet with Chairman Arafat. I don't think the United States can be an honest broker if we only meet with one side.

However, I do have to ask you this in picking up on Mr. Weiner's point, every time it seems we get close to a meeting, close to a cease-fire, there's another suicide bombing, bus. Just as the vice president was on his way to the Middle East, another suicide bombing of a bus last Thursday there. There was more shooting, more killing of Israelis over the weekend. Either Mr. Arafat doesn't want to stop the violence or he has no control over his people. Which is it?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO UNITED STATES: Before I answer your question, I want to make two remarks. One, at least 60 percent of these Ili Kineset (ph) members differ with the congressman over how to deal with the Palestinians and with Arafat. They believe that Arafat is their partner. They believe that he is the only man who can make peace with Israel, and he has led the Palestinians in the direction of peace.

The second remark, the congressman speaks of 335 Israeli casualties, and we are sorry for the death on the Israeli side. But I did not hear the Congressman mentioning the assassination, the killing and the destruction of 1,300 Palestinians, killed at the hands of the Israelis; 435 of them are little children. I hope does that he not believe that the Palestinian life is less than Israeli life.

PRESS: Let me get to my question again. I think both sides have to stop the violence. Why hasn't Yasser Arafat done it given the opportunity?

RAHMAN: I'll tell you why. Yasser Arafat, first of all, like Saeb Erekat said, is a hostage under house arrest. His country, the West Bank and Gaza, is occupied by no less than 40,000 Israeli soldiers with 500 tanks. Just two weeks ago, they arrested 3,000 Palestinians. They have all the Palestinian people

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under siege, deprived of their very basic rights. This environment makes it difficult for Yasser Arafat to function.

PRESS: Mr. Rahman, I'd like you to answer this question. On Thursday, there was a suicide bombing that killed some more Israelis, injured others. Israeli officials said this was done by a member of an offshoot -- not an offshoot, of a part of the Al Fatah organization, political party that is headed by Mr. Arafat. And they said that Mr. Arafat gave the order. What is the truth of that?

RAHMAN: That is absolute lie, and I challenge the Israelis to produce one evidence that this man had any connection with Yasser Arafat or with any Palestinian organization or that Yasser Arafat has previous knowledge of this event.

PRESS: Congressman...

RAHMAN: This is absolute lie...

PRESS: I think I hear you wanting to jump in, Congressman.

RAHMAN: ... by the Israelis and by whoever perpetrated this lie.

PRESS: Congressman Weiner?

WEINER: Listen, the fundamental question is do you believe that suicide bombers, 19-year-old, 20-year-old suicide bombers who walk into restaurants, cafes and town squares, blow themselves up, is that reasonable political debate? Mr. Arafat says it is. Members of the Fatah movement pay a bounty...

RAHMAN: No, he does not. He does not.

WEINER: They pay a bounty to families of those martyrs that they call them.

RAHMAN: Congressman, he does not. And Yasser Arafat has condemned every single one of them. But I have not heard you condemning Israeli killing of a 4-year-old girl yesterday and a teacher and 430...

WEINER: Why is it on Arab television...

RAHMAN: Why don't you take the high moral ground, Mr. Congressman, and condemn the Israeli army for killing Palestinian children?

WEINER: Can I say something? Why is it that today, if you were you to tune in Palestinian terrorism...

RAHMAN: Why don't you?

PRESS: Let him answer.

WEINER: If you were to tune into Palestinian terrorism, you would hear advertisements directed at children saying drop your toys and take up arms. Why are martyrs who commit suicide bombings, like ones that took my constituents...

RAHMAN: You did not answer my question.

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WEINER: Why is it that they are giving bounties by Yasser Arafat?

RAHMAN: You did not answer my question.

(CROSSTALK)

I am willing to condemn Palestinian killing of Israeli civilians.

WEINER: Oh, I'll alert the media. You're willing to condemn suicide bombings. That's terrific.

RAHMAN: Are you willing to condemn Israeli for killings of Palestinians?

WEINER: Can I tell you something? Right now, the Palestinians...

RAHMAN: Are you or not?

(CROSSTALK)

PRESS: Go ahead quickly, Congressman.

WEINER: Here's what I would say. The moment that Yasser Arafat embraces the Tenet Plan, saying a cessation of violence, the Mitchell Plan, cessation of violence. The minute that he moves up to Oslo that he signed onto -- you know, can I say something? There would not be any bloodshed if not for the Palestinians initiating it, period.

NOVAK: OK. I'm afraid that's going to have to be the last word, Mr. Rahman.

PRESS: We're just getting started.

NOVAK: Thank you very much. Congressman Weiner, thank you very much. When we come back, why are some states dying to revive the death tax?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

NOVAK: Welcome back to CROSSFIRE. It's said that two things in life are inevitable, death and taxes. But do they have to come at the same time? In

talking about the dreaded estate tax, President Bush had the good sense to repeal it. But now many states seeing an available source of revenue want to revive it.

Good idea, or would it create a crazy patchwork of the state tax rates with some states becoming good places for old millionaires to die? Our guest, Democratic Senator Jon Corzine of New Jersey, he's in New York City, and Republican Senator Jon Kyl of Arizona, he's in Phoenix -- Bill.

PRESS: Senator Kyl, I remember the days when Ronald Reagan used to talk about something called the new federalism: Republicans believed in moving power out of Washington, back to the states and kind of letting the states run their own shop.

So you've got to agree, Senator, I think, that if the federal government is dumb enough to repeal the estate tax, that the states don't have to do it, they

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can do whatever they want to, and they've got the right to revive it if they want to, agree on principle?

SEN. JON KYL (R), ARIZONA: Absolutely. If the federal government is smart enough to do it, which we did, the states are certainly entitled to do what they want to do, Bill.

PRESS: Let's look at what's happening to the states. It's calculated that the states, once this thing kicks in, are going to lose \$6.5 billion a year in revenue because of legislation you passed. No state hurt worse than Florida.

This year alone, which is the first year it kicks in, Florida is going to lose \$174 million. That's enough to pay for 5,000 new teachers, or new classrooms for 12,000 students, senator. Don't you think that's a higher priority than giving some billionaires another tax break?

KYL: Bill, that's up to the states to decide. If the governors of Florida or any other state and their state legislatures decide that they need to make that revenue up somehow and they want to do it via the death tax, they can reimpose that tax. There is nothing the federal government can do to stop them. It's up to them to set the priority.

PRESS: You won't say that educating kids and taking care of the schools is more important than giving the rich another tax break?

KYL: What I'm saying is it's up to the people in the state in question to decide that. If they believe it is, and they want to raise the taxes by imposing a death tax, they're free to do so. If they want to raise the revenue in some other way, they are free to do that.

NOVAK: But do you think they should?

PRESS: That's what I've tried to ask him. I don't think he's going to answer it, Bob.

NOVAK: Alright. Senator Corzine, just a second, I want to talk about the death tax in general for a moment.

SEN. JON CORZINE (D), NEW JERSEY: You mean the inheritance tax, don't you Bob?

NOVAK: I can call it what I want, sir. You can call it what you want. That way we are even. Senator, you're a multimillionaire, one of the richest men in the U.S. Senate, and it really makes no difference to you. It's all like Monopoly money, you have so much money, whether you pay some to the federal government. But can you appreciate that there are hardware store owners, there are farmers, as even owners of weekly newspapers that this is life or death for them, to get this tax repealed?

CORZINE: Bob, it's only 2 percent of the population, those who passed, that are subject to the inheritance tax. If we reformed it as opposed to repealing

it, we could take the inheritance tax and reduce its application by two thirds of the population and then it would only apply to about less than 1 percent of the population, be very focused on people that have estates larger than \$8 million.

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This is a canard. The fact is there are horrible unintended consequences to this. We're seeing it in states loss of revenue where in fact we're in amidst of a recession. They're are under a lot of pressure to pay for those schools that Bill was talking about. We are having a backing away from charitable giving in part because people anticipate this.

This has lots of implications that go well beyond, it's outside the context of sort of the Theodore Roosevelt view of America that meritocracy is more important than an aristocracy.

NOVAK: Sir, since I can't get you to agree with me on people who, unlike you, who really made this money the hard way or their family businesses...

CORZINE: Bob, I think you knew I grew up on a 100 acre farm in central Illinois, so I believe in...

NOVAK: You're an investment banker, aren't you?

CORZINE: America provides a lot of opportunity.

NOVAK: But what I want to ask you, sir, is a political question. The fact that we have, even Democrats by the hordes, Democrats in the House voting for this. Do you think it makes much sense politically for your fellow Democrats and state legislatures to say to the people, OK, the federal government has taken this onerous burden off you, but we're going to put it right back on? Do you think that makes sense politically?

CORZINE: I think what has happened here is the federal government forgot to think about the consequences of how state inheritance taxes actually worked, which was coupled with the federal program and without any kind of consultation, just decided that we were going to erode their tax base.

So I think the states have to go back, reevaluate that, decide what they want to do going forward. My point is this is a very narrow slice of society. We're undermining charitable giving. We're undermining state's revenue flows, and we're undermining the Social Security trust fund, because over a long period of time this is really going to truly erode revenue for the federal government.

PRESS: Let me pick up there if I may, Senator Kyl, because I know you call this the death tax, and just so that everybody watching understands again, dead people do not pay this tax. This tax is paid by their kids who did nothing to earn that money, except be born to rich parents, and there are about 2,500 people in the entire country that qualify. So my question to you is, isn't that real special interest legislation? And why do those few people deserve this huge tax break?

KYL: Bill, I guess the answer to the question is why do the overwhelming majority of American people think it's an unfair tax? Why did an overwhelming majority of the House and Senate vote to repeal it? The president signed it into law.

Why did 56 senators just support a sense of the senate resolution that says that the repeal that we affected should be made permanent after the 10th year. It's a very unfair tax. It affects a lot more people than the number of estates

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that pay it. It affects all of the family members, all of the employees of those businesses you talked about, all of the people that are involved in the estate planning, and all of the others who are affected, not just the estates.

But let me make one other point since I do think your program is a good opportunity for education, I want to make it clear that the federal government action in repealing the death tax replaced it with a capital gains tax. And as a result, when those heirs inherit the money, when they sell, they'll pay a capital gains tax on those assets.

PRESS: Senator, while we're informing the public, let's also inform the public that under the plan that you voted for, this tax finally expires in the year 2010 and then kicks back in, full-time, in the year 2011. So basically you've set it up so that in the year 2010 if you want to escape the tax, everybody has got to die or commit suicide in the year 2010, it's such a stupid tax.

KYL: Bill, the way that was done was not good, but that wasn't the fault of the proponents, that was the fault of the opponents who would not allow us to make it permanent. We were restricted to a 10- year program under the reconciliation procedures of the Congress, and that means that whatever we did sunsetted at the end of the 10th year. We all wanted to make that permanent.

CORZINE: Jon, everybody knew that that had to be the way it was if you were going to hold the limits to the amount of erosion of tax revenues for the federal government. That was part of the plan that was put forward.

KYL: Sure. Join me in making it permanent then.

CORZINE: I believe in reform, but not repeal.

NOVAK: Senator Corzine, you have mentioned charitable contributions as an impact. I was just looking at my charitable contributions and really my whole plan for the rest of my life. It would have no effect on what happens to the estate tax, or any kind of contribution.

Are you saying that the Americans, who are the most philanthropic and generous people in the world are doing it just for a tax break? Do you think really, boy, I was going to establish a charity at my university, and somebody would say no, I'm not going to do it now because the estate tax is not there anymore?

CORZINE: I think there are a number of surveys out that show people would be less willing to give the kinds of money they've given if they were going to be able to control those resources long into the future. But I think this is less the point than whether we want to establish sort of a concentration of wealth in this society that is different than we've ever had a principle of having throughout our century.

PRESS: Hate to interrupt, Senator. That's got to be the last word. We are out of time. Senator Corzine, up in New York, thanks for joining us. Senator Kyl out there in Phoenix good to have you with us again, sir. Good debate.

And when we come back, signs of the times, including one big embarrassing

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sign that's coming down. And plus I'm going to warn you, I might even have a kind word to say about Bob Novak.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

PRESS: And now our pictures of the day. Roll the tape. A couple of pieces of videotape today tell a big story, starting out in Houston, where the mighty Enron has no friends left, not even the Astros. One by one, workers have removed all traces of Enron from what used to be called Enron field. The Astros wanted to disassociate them selves from that disgraced company so badly, they paid Enron \$2.1 million to take its signs down. Baseball fans, check out Ebay, you may be able to buy an Enron sign cheap.

NOVAK: Bill, this picture beats all. Who was that at the so- called "In Style" Academy Awards party at Hollywood Sunday dressed to kill in a black

dress?

Oh, it must have been somebody impersonating Janet Reno. NO! It's the real Janet Reno. The former attorney general running for governor of Florida tooling around the stage in a pickup truck. Why did she join this Oscar crowd in Hollywood? Well, facing many more months of humiliation in a losing campaign, a gal has to get her kicks somewhere.

PRESS: How cruel. Hey, Bob, I'm not hear tomorrow night, you're not here the rest of the week, so this is our last CROSSFIRE show together. I just have to say, professionally, you are a great debater, a strong adversary, you work harder than anyone I know in this town, you just get your facts wrong, but personally, you've helped me get this job, you have supported me every day of it, I am going to say a big thank you.

NOVAK: Well, thank you very much. Bill, you were wrong about almost everything. I pray for your eternal soul most of the time. But I'll tell you this, I've been on this show off and on for 20 years, and the last six years working with you I've enjoyed more because you're a gentleman, and you're smart and you're always well informed. Good luck.

PRESS: Thank you, Robert. A secret, don't tell anybody we really like each other. From the left, I will see you Wednesday night. I'm Bill Press. Good night for CROSSFIRE.

NOVAK: From the right, I'm Robert Novak. Join us again next time for another edition of CROSSFIRE. TO ORDER A VIDEO OF THIS TRANSCRIPT, PLEASE CALL 800-CNN-NEWS OR USE OUR SECURE ONLINE ORDER FORM LOCATED AT www.fdch.com

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SHOW: America Now

March 22, 2002, Friday 8:00

PM ET

NETWORK: CNBC Cable Programming

MEDIUM: Cable

LENGTH: 81 words

BODY:

START: 32.53

Teased Segment - Peace. The third suicide bomber died in front of an Israeli checkpoint today.

Visual - Hospital.

Visual - Anthony Zinni, Yasser Arafat.

Sound Bites - President Bush saying that we will fight terrorism anywhere around the world.

Studio Interview - **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, chief Palestinian in US, discussing peace in the Middle East.

Studio Interview - Ido Aharoni, Israeli Govt spokesman, discussing peace in the Middle East.

END: 40.21

SEGMENT-ID: 11

PROGRAM-ID: cnbc20000322

LOAD-DATE: May 1, 2002

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CNBC News Transcripts

SHOW: Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC

March 21, 2002 Thursday

LENGTH: 1936 words

HEADLINE: Sharon Senior Advisor Raanan Gissin and **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, PLO representative to the US, discuss cancellation of peace talks due to more Palestinian violence

ANCHORS: CHRIS MATTHEWS

BODY:

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host:

The big story tonight: Palestinian violence derails cease-fire talks. Israeli officials cancelled the latest round of truce talks scheduled for today after a Palestinian suicide bomber killed two and wounded at least 60 people in the heart of Jerusalem. The Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade, a militia linked to Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement claimed credit for the bombing. President Bush had some stern words for the Palestinian leader.

President GEORGE W. BUSH: We set some strong conditions and we expect Mr. Arafat to meet those conditions. I, frankly, have been disappointed in his performance. I'm hopeful, however, that he listens to what the vice president told him and said that in order for us to have influence, in terms of achieving any kind of peaceful resolution, he must--he, Mr. Arafat, must do everything in his power to stop the violence.

MATTHEWS: Raanan Gissin is the senior advisor to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. And **Hasan Abdel Rahman** is the Palestinian representative here in the United States. Let's go to Mr. Gissin, who is in Jerusalem.

Mr. Gissin, what will be the impact of this latest--latest atrocity in the streets of Jerusalem, on the talks?

Mr. RAANAN GISSIN (Sharon Senior Advisor): Well, I'm a--I'm afraid that Yasser Arafat is quickly reaching that moment of truth where there will be no return. We've seen him take no action whatsoever, not a declaration for a cease-fire, not issuing orders to his troops. And Tanzin, by the way, is not just associated with Arafat, it's an organization that is on his payroll, that is paid by him, directed by him, controlled by him. And there's been no attempt to stop the vilifying incitement that brings those young people to the streets to commit these heinous murders.

MATTHEWS: Let's go to Mr. Rahman who is here with me. As a spokesman for the PLO, does--does your organization accept responsibility for the behavior today of the Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade, which, apparently, one of these people

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committed suicide, killed two Israelis and injured 60?

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (Palestine Liberation Organization Representative to the United States): Of course not. And as we always indicated, we are opposed to any violence against the region. But we hold responsible for those acts the Israeli government and the behavior of the Israeli army, which is pushing those young people to desperation. If Mr. Gissin would just reflect on the behavior of the Israeli army. When they stood men half-naked, detained people in concentration camps behind barbed-wires. When they are still imposing a siege on 3.2 million Palestinians, starving them literally. He must reflect on this behavior by Israel, which is leading those young men to become suicide bombers. Those young men were not war suicide bombers. They are pushed to become suicide bombers because of the conditions in which they live...(unintelligible)...and desperation.

MATTHEWS: Mr. Gissin, do you want to respond to that, Sir?

Mr. GISSIN: Yeah, that--I mean, this--this kind of duplicity and--and, you

know, saying that the Israeli army--how did we get there in the first place? We didn't want this war. It was imposed on us 18 months ago. And the Palestinians have sent suicide bombers time and again before there was any action by the Israeli army. Ten cease-fires, we agreed for 10 cease-fires. Yasser Arafat did not comply with even one, neither did the Palestinian leaders. And now they are exonerating and condoning and hailing those suicide bombers. Now, when a society is engaged in that, I think it is a society that's on the verge of losing any semblance of civility, just like human animals.

Mr. RAHMAN: I believe that the behavior of the Israelis against the Palestinians was characterized by no other than the secretary general of the United Nations, which he said bordered almost--almost on war crimes in the territories, when Israel moved in and killed 300 Palestinians, arrested 3,000. And by the way, Mr. Gissin, this conflict did not start a few months ago. It's been going on for...

Mr. GISSIN: Oh, of course not.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...for 35 years since Israel occupied the territories.

Mr. GISSIN: It's 50--54 years.

Mr. RAHMAN: Let me finish, because I waited for you to finish. Thirty-five years of occupation, illegal military occupation, in which you moved 300,000 Jewish settlers into the heart of the Palestinian towns, making the life of the Palestinian people miserable, stealing their land, their livelihood and their dignity. You turned our people into suicide bombers, Mr. Gissin, by the way you behaved towards them. You have to take responsibility for your actions.

MATTHEWS: Mr. Gissin, let's talk about the whole question how to do with the--from your perspective as an Israeli, how do you deal with the fact that Yasser Arafat has limited control, apparently, over these terrorists? He has some control over the people associated with--with the El Fatah movement, like the Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade. There are others, like the ones who committed the crime yesterday, you had the Islamic Jihad suicide. Did you--is that why you changed your reaction? Yesterday you went ahead with the talks because it was

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done by somebody outside the orbit.

Mr. GISSIN: No, no.

MATTHEWS: This time because it's somebody inside the orbit of Yasser Arafat.

Mr. GISSIN: Well, you're taking an assumption and making it a truth, and it's nonsense. Because Yasser Arafat has full control over this organization. This man that conducted today's terrorist attack, five days ago was arrested by the security forces of Yasser Arafat upon our request. And they said, 'We need to transport him from Iran to Ramallah,' and we allowed them, thinking, 'Very well, they'll put him in prison,' because he was wanted. He was a ticking bomb. And then he was released from prison. And the first time he appeared--the next time he appeared was on the street in Jerusalem with a heinous crime of killing innocent civilians. So Yasser Arafat could have stopped this particular man. And there are ample examples, many examples, of this kind of duplicity. Speaking about peace, but acting acts of terror, continuing to condone terror, to insight to terror. I'm sorry, we had enough of it. This land is also our land. It's my ancestral homeland and I have a right to defend the citizens of Israel who are living on that land. We are--we want peace because peace is our natural choice. But if the Palestinians decide that the way that they are going to conduct their business with us is with terrorism, then we will respond in kind.

MATTHEWS: Let's talk about that response. You start, Mr. Hasan. Did--does Yasser Arafat still want to go to the Arab League meeting in Beirut?

Mr. RAHMAN: He wants to, but Israel cannot treat Yasser Arafat as a prisoner in his house and expect him to behave like a president. When Israel, in the last 18 months, destroyed every single police station, every single vehicle, targeted policemen, targeted Palestinian leaders and killed them, what does Israel expect?

MATTHEWS: But if--let me just ask you--I'm not going--I'm not--look...

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes, Arafat wants to go to the summit. And he wants to push...

MATTHEWS: Well, why didn't he stop the terrorist today?

Mr. RAHMAN: He cannot.

MATTHEWS: Why can't he stop a guy from the Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade, who's under him?

Mr. RAHMAN: He can't. That's absolutely nonsense what Gissin said.

MATTHEWS: Well, is the Al-Aqsa Martyr's Brigade part of the El Fatah movement or not?

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes!

MATTHEWS: Well, then why can't he control his own movement?

Mr. RAHMAN: Those are local goofs. They are disconnected. You see, the West
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Bank has been dissected into 64 zones by the Israeli army. If Mr. Gissin with the 30,000 policemen and army, and the 450 tanks could not protect Jerusalem, he cannot expect Yasser Arafat from his pri--his prison in Ramallah to protect Jerusalem for him.

MATTHEWS: OK. Mr. Gissin, will the government of Ya--of Ariel Sharon permit Mr. Arafat to go to the Arab League meeting in Beirut this weekend?

Mr. GISSIN: If he complies with the demands and with the requirements, on the basis of reciprocity we warrant their 18 months. Eighteen months ago there was a possibility of peace. There was a political horizon. And Israel made mo--more concessions than the Palestinians ever received from any Arab country.

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. GISSIN: But Arafat has chosen a strategy of terror. And now we have to bear the consequences...

Mr. RAHMAN: The problem is not with our country. It's with you.

Mr. GISSIN: ...the consequences of that strategy.

MATTHEWS: Both gentlemen, we have less than a minute, is there going to be an agreement along the lines of General Zinni's notion, he's our--he's our diplomat, our mediator in your countries, is there going to be some sort of bridging proposal accepted by both sides? You, Mr. Rahman?

Mr. RAHMAN: We want him to succeed. We are ready to work with him. But we want Israel to cooperate in order to change the miserable conditions under which the Palestinians live today.

MATTHEWS: But the--but your demand that the government--the idea to withdraw his forces from the occupied territories is, in fact, being done, isn't it?
Isn't...

Mr. RAHMAN: No, it is not! The army is still circling the cities and towns. My family cannot move from one street to the other.

MATTHEWS: OK.

Mr. RAHMAN: My nephews cannot go to school because the Israeli army makes it impossible for them to arrive there.

MATTHEWS: Mr. Gissin, is the ar--is the government of the Ariel Sharon, which you advise, are they, in fact, moving to withdraw their troops from the occupied territories, Arab territories.

Mr. GISSIN: We--I--I'm sorry, that's a bunch of lies. We have moved our forces from area A, where we didn't want to be in the first place, were forced

by the Palestinian terror.

Mr. RAHMAN: But you were circling the cities, Mr. Gissin.

Mr. GISSIN: And therefore--and--look, if you--if you would have reciprocated,

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this is a decision that the Palestinian people have to take.

Mr. RAHMAN: But then what you are saying is you're not going to do it.

MATTHEWS: What have we done to...

Mr. GISSIN: We are willing to--we are willing to remove...(unintelligible)...but they have not done anything.

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, what he's saying--on the one hand he is saying--on the one hand he is saying that we will do it, and on the other he says, you have to reciprocate in order to do it.

MATTHEWS: Yeah.

Mr. RAHMAN: That's nonsense!

Mr. GISSIN: No, you have a leader that you elected and selected...

MATTHEWS: Well, there has to be some...(unintelligible)...

Mr. RAHMAN: Of course.

Mr. GISSIN: Then you have--there's responsibility for your actions.

Mr. RAHMAN: They invaded the cities and towns...

MATTHEWS: Yeah.

Mr. RAHMAN: They invaded the cities. They imposed the...

MATTHEWS: OK, we've got to--we got to break. Thank you very much for joining us, Mr. Rahman. It's great to have you.

Mr. RAHMAN: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, who speaks for the PLO. And we're great to have Raanan Gissin who is a close advisor to Ariel Sharon, the prime minister of Israel. Please, both of you, come back.

Up next, the HARDBALL DEBATE. I think we already had one. Is Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territory illegal? That's what UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called it. We'll hear from both sides when we return on HARDBALL. You're watching it.

(Announcements)

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CNN INTERNATIONAL

SHOW: INSIGHT 05:00 PM Eastern Standard Time

March 21, 2002 Thursday

Transcript # 032101cb.k01

SECTION: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL

LENGTH: 4142 words

HEADLINE: Violence in Middle East

GUESTS: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Ra'anan Gissin

BYLINE: Jonathan Mann, Christiane Amanpour, Mike Hanna

HIGHLIGHT:

A look at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JONATHAN MANN, CNN ANCHOR (voice-over): Road block. A suicide bomber on a busy shopping street kills three Israelis. The effort to restart talks with the Palestinians is setback once again.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

Hello and welcome.

Two Palestinian suicide bombings in two days. Wednesday, seven passengers on a bus were killed. Thursday, three more people on a Jerusalem street.

The Sharon government has essentially given up on Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, but maintains links to his aides on security.

The Bush administration is openly frustrated, but had held out the prospect of high level talks. Thursday's security meeting has been canceled now, and
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talks with Vice President Cheney look a lot less likely.

On our program today, the latest step forward and the latest steps back.

First, though, a quick check of the hour's headlines.

United States President George W. Bush is bowing that a car bomb near the United States embassy in Peru will not deter him from visiting this weekend.

Nine people were killed and at least 25 wounded in the Thursday blast.

The attack immediately renewed fears of leftist rebel violence which plagued the country in the 80s and 90s. No one has claimed responsibility, but United States intelligence agency suspect the Shining Path, a Maoist group that once terrorized Peru.

The first stop on Mr. Bush's trip is the Mexican city of Monterey, where he'll attend a United Nation's development conference. The event, hosted by Mexican President Vicente Fox is drawing government and business leaders from around the world.

U.N. Sect. Gen. Kofi Annan opened Thursday's session, saying rich nations depend on the stability of the poor countries more than ever. Participants at the conference are appealing for more aid to help prevent developing countries from becoming breeding grounds for terrorism and violence.

United States Def. Sec. Donald Rumsfeld has announced new guidelines for military tribunals that the United States plans for some members of al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Rumsfeld says the new trial procedures for the detainees will afford them some of the rights accorded civilian defendants. The tribunals, which are now being called military commissions, would comprise three to seven members of the military.

Rumsfeld says that so far, no detainees have been chose to face the commissions.

Pope John Paul II has spoken out about a wave of pedophilia allegations against Roman Catholic priests. In a letter addressed to priests around the world, the pontiff said he was profoundly hurt by what he called the most grievous form of evil.

He wrote, and we quote:

"Grave scandal is caused, with the result that a dark shadow of suspicion is cast over all the fine priests who perform their ministry with honesty and integrity and often with heroic self-sacrifice."

The letter was released on Thursday.

There has been so much bloodshed in the Middle East, that the time of the latest attacks is really what sets them apart.

The United States had been drawn back into an active role in the region. The
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first step to end the cycle of attack and retribution seemed to be in sight.

The efforts were not immediately interrupted by Wednesday's attack. And then Thursday, there was an attack again.

Christiane Amanpour begins our coverage.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR, CNN CORRESPONDENT: It was about 4:15 in the afternoon.

Israelis have tried to keep away from this commercial district in the heart of west Jerusalem because of previous suicide bombings. But on this day, those who had to be there were caught in yet another attack.

GIL KLEIMAN, POLICE SPOKESMAN: A suicide bomber entered a main street in Jerusalem, King George Street, blew himself outside an eatery and a shoe store.

As a result of that, we had two dead. One victim was pronounced dead on the scene. The other victim died later in the hospital. We have about 40 wounded.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: And I heard bang.

AMANPOUR: This attack comes just a day after another suicide bomber killed seven Israelis and wounded dozens more aboard a bus in the north of the country. Palestinian sources told the media the latest suicide bomber was a member of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, a militant wing of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement. The terrible irony is that this attack comes at a time when Yasser Arafat is perceived to have been scoring points, not only being involved in cease fire talks, but also being offered a political horizon as well.

This attack also comes right at a time when Israeli and Palestinian security officials are meeting to try to hammer out that cease fire.

A third meeting between security officials and United States envoy Anthony Zinni, scheduled for Thursday night, was immediately postponed.

An Israeli government spokesman blamed Yasser Arafat for the carnage, even as Arafat condemned the bombing and all attacks against Israeli civilians.

YASSER ARAFAT, PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT (through translator): We strongly condemn this operation that happened in Jerusalem today, especially that it was directed against innocent Israeli civilians. We will take all immediate necessary measures to stop those kind of actions and to stop those behind it.

AMANPOUR: As Israel ponders its next move, some citizens on the scene are urging harsh retaliation.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I think the Arabs only understand force, and that's what needs to be done.

AMANPOUR: And Israelis who believe in the peace process are once again plunged into despair.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well, it just makes me want there to be peace, and want
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them to put a stop to it. I don't know whether that means using more force or more negotiation, but neither one seems to be working.

AMANPOUR: This suicide bomber detonated his deadly charge right below a banner that proclaims we want to live in peace. The blood on the wall shows how far away peace still is.

Christiane Amanpour, CNN, Jerusalem.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

MANN: The Israeli security cabinet says it will show restraint after Thursday's suicide bombing, to give United States peace efforts a chance.

United States President George W. Bush wants those efforts to succeed. he wants it badly. He sent back his Middle East envoy to help engineer a United Nations resolution calling for a Palestinian state, and dangled that possible meeting with his vice president, all in hopes of achieving a cease fire.

Thursday, he expressed his frustration.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, U.S. PRESIDENT: I, frankly, have been disappointed in his performance. I'm hopeful, however, that he listens to what the vice president told him, and said that in order for us to have influence in terms of achieving any kind of peaceful resolution, he must, he, Mr. Arafat, must do everything in his power to stop the violence.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MANN: That frustration also expressed itself in the form of a tongue-lashing from the United States Sect. of State, Colin Powell. After the latest suicide bombing, one official told CNN that Powell made it a personal issue with Yasser Arafat.

The secretary of state demanded that Arafat publicly condemn the latest attacks, in both English and Arabic, arrest those responsible, and bring them to justice.

A short time later, Arafat made that statement to reporters condemning the bombing.

Where the peace process goes now, however, is anyone's guess.

Here's CNN's Mike Hanna.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MIKE HANNA, CNN CORRESPONDENT: A suicide bomber strikes again in Jerusalem, just hours before Palestinian and Israeli security chiefs were due to hold another in a series of meetings aimed at securing a cease fire.

Even as the wounded were being taken to hospitals, the announcement that the

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INSIGHT 05:00 PM Eastern Standard Time March 21, 2002 Thursday talks was postponed, slowing what all parties said was a growing momentum towards agreement on a truce.

United States envoy Anthony Zinni has seen this all before. His two previous missions marked by an upsurge in violence ended in failure. The man who'd come to broker a peace then ended up mourning more dead.

At this time, there were distinct signs of progress in the cease fire talks that took place before the bombing between Palestinian and Israeli security chiefs behind closed doors.

Ariel Sharon had dropped his insistence that there would be no cease fire talks until there was a complete end to violence, and had declared he would hold discussions with any Palestinian leader once a cease fire was implemented.

Before the Jerusalem attack, Israelis foreign minister was optimistic about an agreement.

SHIMON PERES, ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER: There was a fair chance for it, the parties are vowed to tell the truth. And opportunity is more attractive than before, because for the Palestinians, they have what they asked for, a sort of political horizon.

HANNA: Each side has now presented Zinni with a position paper outlining its view of how the Tenet cease fire plan should be implemented.

The plan, drawn up by the CIA director last year, provides for a series of tangible actions that Israel and the Palestinian Authority must be seen to take.

SAEB ERAKAT, CHIEF PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATOR: We hope now, since the American side now has the Palestinian plan and the Israeli plan, that the guiding lines will be very simple in principle. Tenet, as was written, no fragmentation, no

missions, no additions, no (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

HANNA: But the Jerusalem attack is seen by the Israeli government as evidence that Arafat will not, or cannot, meet a key Tenet dictate, that there be a crackdown on militant groups, and that every effort be made to end attacks against Israeli targets.

Within hours of the Jerusalem bombing, Arafat's pledged to hunt down those responsible. But Israel and the United States are looking for more than pledges.

Anthony Zinni has a clear mandate to determine whether each side is meeting its commitment to the cease fire. It's a broad mandate, given to the envoy by the president of the United States and acknowledged by both Israelis and Palestinians.

So at this stage, an announcement on the fate of the cease fire process will be made by Anthony Zinni.

Mike Hanna, CNN, Jerusalem.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

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MANN: We take a break. When we come back, whose actually in charge, Yasser Arafat or the extremists?

Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MANN (voice-over): This is the work of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, a little known group that has emerged with some of the deadliest and most spectacular attacks against Israelis.

First in the West Bank and Gaza, and then within Israel itself.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

Welcome back.

The Al Aqsa Brigades claimed responsibility for Thursday's attack, and shortly after the Bush administration announced it had designated the brigades a foreign terrorist organization, a step that allows the United States to block its finances and intervene with banks. It also further clouds United States relations with the Palestinian Authority, because the brigades are widely described as linked to Yasser Arafat's own Fatah movement.

The United States, as we've heard, is waiting for Arafat to order an end to all attacks.

CNN's Christiane Amanpour met with some members of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades. They say they would follow the order if it was issued.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

AMANPOUR (voice-over): In a rare encounter with journalists, here in an orange orchard in Gaza, members of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, a military wing of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, told CNN that they would abide by a cease fire if Arafat orders one.

"Until we have a decision on a cease fire by our president," he says, "our operations continue."

Displaying some of their homemade mortars and other weapons, this group has claimed responsibility for recent attacks that include killing more than a dozen Israeli soldiers. They have also taken part in an operation to destroy an Israeli tank, as well as suicide bombings, like the one in Jerusalem's orthodox Jewish neighborhood a few weeks ago.

We asked how they continue to justify attacking civilians.

"We prefer attacking military infrastructure or army checkpoints," he says, "but the Israelis are stronger militarily than us. So we have to attack within

the civilian population."

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When told that attacking ordinary people erodes support for their cause, they point to places like the Jabalia (ph) refugee camp in Gaza, population 100,000, teeming with despair and resistance.

A recent Israeli military incursion destroyed metal shops suspected of making mortars and rockets and left 19 people dead.

The Israelis raided the Jabalia (ph) refugee camp exactly a week ago, and as with previous operations, they said this one was to root out terror bases.

And, indeed, some militants were killed. But the majority of those who died that night were civilians, leaving an even more embittered and hateful population here.

We came across the Isadeen (ph) family, still mourning two senior family members.

"First, my grandfather was hit, and then when my father went to help him, he was killed," says eight-year-old Hannah (ph).

Her Uncle Farid (ph) tells us the two men were killed as they came up here to their roof to see what was happening when they heard Israeli tanks outside.

Today, Farid (ph) is very bitter.

"It's impossible to have peace with the Jews," he says. "I think they are blood thirsty and don't want peace at all."

And downstairs, where the women mourn, his mother wails for God's help in avenging the deaths of her husband and son, while yet another generation of Palestinian children absorb yet another lesson in hatred, sorrow, and defiance.

Christiane Amanpour, CNN, in Gaza.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

MANN: The question is asked again and again: how much control does the Palestinian leadership have?

The links are difficult to nail down. Yasser Arafat is the leader of Fatah, the largest movement within the Palestine Liberation Organization. He created an armed wing for Fatah called the Tanzim in 1995, as a counterbalance, it said, to the growing power of Islamic extremist groups.

The Al Aqsa Brigades are said to be an offshoot of the Tanzim.

Joining us now to talk about controlling the violence are two guests, Ra'anan Gissin, P.M. Sharon's spokesman, and **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, chief Palestinian representative in the United States.

If we can start in the United States in Washington, let me ask you first of all, Christiane Amanpour heard a very clear statement from the Al Aqsa Brigades.

Other journalists have heard the same. That if Chairman Arafat orders an end to their attacks, they will stop them. Why isn't that order given clearly,

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publicly, and in a binding way?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN REP.: I think Yasser Arafat did issue that order on December 16th, and he issued it today and yesterday.

I am not sure who are those individuals that Christiane interviewed, and what are their links with Fatah. It is not very clear.

But let me say this, I believe that also Christiane said something different.

She said that the bitter situation and the hopelessness of the Palestinians living in refugee camps under Israeli occupation, they are killed, they are tortured, their homes are demolished, turns those people into a violence people.

It is not -- those people are not born suicide bombers. They are the produce of the conditions in which they live.

I feel so angry and sad when I see a young Palestinian killing himself and killing Israelis in the process. That's not what we want for our children. What we want...

MANN: Let me ask you, though, can you -- you call them your children, in the larger sense, I'm sure. Can those children be controlled? The United States government, the Israeli government, is putting pressure on Yasser Arafat to actually stop these attacks by the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades. It is said widely that though these are loose organizations, they do owe some loyalty to Yasser Arafat.

Yes or no: can they be stopped? Can Yasser Arafat do it?

RAHMAN: Yasser Arafat is under house arrest. His police force is battered by a systematic destruction by Israel over the last 18 months.

The Palestinian people are living in desperate situations. 50 percent of them are unemployed.

Yasser Arafat cannot have full control over them, even if he has the will to do it, because logistically and politically it is extremely difficult.

He will try, and I'm sure that the one who wants quiet more than anyone else is Yasser Arafat, because neither he nor the Palestinians will win anything as a result of violence.

But the Israelis are not helping. When they deploy thousands of their soldiers and tanks and helicopters and kill and destroy, they create more suicide bombers.

That's why we ask Israel, what do you benefit from killing more Palestinians?

MANN: Let's hear from the Israeli side. Ra'anan Gissin, is Israel to blame for these attacks?

RA'ANAN GISSIN, SHARON ADVISOR: Well, you know, that has been always the case. You know, Abdul Rahman, they always blame Israel and they always say Israel is the one that is to be blamed.

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But let's look 18 months ago. Wasn't there a political horizon for the Palestinians? Israel has offered them more than any other Arab country offered. They were on the way to establish peace, real peace.

Yasser Arafat rejected it and opted for a strategy of terror, and ever since then there have been 10 cease fires, all violated by Yasser Arafat. There have been 10 suicide attacks inside Jerusalem.

We did not go into the Palestinian camp or into the Palestinian cities because we wanted to harm Palestinians. We extend an open hand for peace, and what we get in return every time is a suicide bomber.

Well, time is running out, and you can't fool all the people all the time.

Yasser Arafat cannot...

MANN: What is the relationship between this latest suicide bombing, or the latest series of attacks? To Israeli eyes, how much control does Yasser Arafat have over the Al Aqsa brigades, which are emerging, it should be said, probably as the most extremist, certainly the most violent of the groups that are fighting Israel.

GISSIN: He created them. He is financing them. They are part of his flesh and blood.

He is giving them directions. Marwan Barguti (ph) is his most loyal deputy.

This organization that sent today this suicide bomber, the suicide bomber was supposed to be in prison. We were told, when we identified him five days ago, that he was going to be put in prison in Ramallah. We allowed him to be transferred to Ramallah, he disappeared in Ramallah.

This is the sort of revolving door -- and then when does he show up again?

He shows up in the street of Jerusalem, you know, with this suicide bombing, killing three people and wounding 40.

This is repeatedly the pattern. Arafat cannot bask in his neutrality. He cannot bask and exonerate himself of deeds or misdeeds conducting terrorist activity. If he is supposed to be the leader with which we have to make peace, a leader with which we are asked to take risks on behalf of peace, how can we trust him when every time he turns around, speaks about peace, and then rides the wave of terrorism? I don't know where to -- probably to Beirut.

MANN: How can, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, how can the Israelis look to the Palestinian Authority, and to Yasser Arafat, with trust, if as you say, on December 16th, he did what everyone was asking, and since December 16th there has been still so much violence? How do you reestablish trust in this situation?

RAHMAN: You know, after December 16th, there were three weeks of total quiet. Mr. Sharon decided to continue his policy of assassinating Palestinian leaders, and that's why this assassination of Palestinian leaders and the demolishing of homes triggered this reaction by this group.

So, yes, we have some Palestinians who use violence, and we condemn them, and we are opposed to it. But on the Israeli side, it is the Israeli government
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that is using violence against the Palestinians.

What does Mr. Gissin say to the secretary general of the United Nations, who accused Israel of crimes bordering on war crimes, when they deployed their thousands of soldiers against civilians?

You should have just listened to Christiane Amanpour, what she said. There were 300 Palestinians killed. There were 3,000 Palestinians stripped naked, children, their parents, and they are put in detention camps. If you were a son of one Palestinian who sees an Israeli soldier humiliating him, beating him, beating his mother, destroying his furniture, what would you be?

We did not invite Israelis to occupy us. You are illegally occupying our territories for 35 years. Get out of those territories.

MANN: Let's talk about the future now. Ra'anan Gissin, you heard...

GISSIN: It's not illegal occupation. This is disputed territory. This is more...

(CROSSTALK)

MANN: This argument is not a new one, gentlemen.

Let me ask you about the next few days and the next few weeks, because if, in fact, to just repeat what we've heard, there has been a kind of provocation of these attacks from the Israeli government -- the Israeli security cabinet said a short time ago, there would not be reason to provoke more. There would be restraint from the Israeli side.

What does restraining from the Israeli side mean, now, Ra'anan Gissin, and how long does it last?

GISSIN: You know, we said that we are going to welcome Gen. Zinni and provide him any assistance and any help, and we do it. We do it while we are bleeding. Every day, there is an attack.

It's almost like a unilateral cease fire. And I warn, this is not going to last for long.

The Palestinian Authority does not take the necessary measures, by all counts. What President Bush has demanded from them, what Sect. Powell, what Gen. Zinni -- it's a slap on the face. But who do they think they're fooling? We weren't there 18 months ago. We came there because we had to defend ourselves against a horrendous terrorist attack, a terrorist attack that the

world today will not exonerate, will not accept. It's a different world today.

MANN: There is enormous optimism today, Ra'anan Gissin, about the Saudi proposal for peace. There is the possibility it will be discussed at the Arab Summit. Will the Israeli government let Yasser Arafat go to the Arab Summit?

(CROSSTALK)

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GISSIN: If he fulfills his obligations, the ones that he took, the one that he promised Gen. Zinni, then he is free to go.

But up to now, he hasn't taken one step, didn't issue one statement to the effect to calm down the situation. It seems that he wants to escalate the situation and create an all out war.

MANN: Let's hear from Mr. Abdel Rahman. You're trying to get in, **Hasan Abdel Rahman?**

RAHMAN: Yes. We want a cease fire. We want to get out of this violence, because we both are suffering. It is sheer madness, but there are conditions for that.

We get a cease fire, the Israelis withdraw their troops from the cities and towns, and lift the siege on the Palestinians. Make the Palestinians believe and then go to the negotiating table to end Israel's 35 years of illegal occupation, hoping to lead to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, next to Israel, living in peace.

Without that political horizon, without a political solution, we, I am afraid to say, are condemned to a violent confrontation for many years. It is in the hands of Mr. Sharon.

Would he want to support the settlers who are illegal in the Palestinian territories? Or does he want to have peace with the Palestinians? It is his choice.

MANN: Ra'anan Gissin, the last word will be to you.

GISSIN: They have the same right as you have. We've walked this land young before your forefathers...

(CROSSTALK)

GISSIN: We also have the right. You don't recognize my right to live on this land, and that's the real problem.

(CROSSTALK)

GISSIN: I'm willing to share this land with you. You want everything. You want to throw us out, but you see...

(CROSSTALK)

MANN: On that note of disagreement, we're going to have to bring this conversation to an end.

We thank you both for being with us. I'm sorry it hasn't ended more easily.

Ra'anan Gissin and **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, we're grateful for your time.

That's INSIGHT for this day. I'm Jonathan Mann. There's more news ahead.

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SHOW: THE O'REILLY FACTOR (20:21)

March 21, 2002 Thursday

Transcript # 032103cb.256

SECTION: News; International

LENGTH: 1334 words

HEADLINE: Impact

Interview With **Hasan Abdel Rahman**

GUESTS: Hasan Abdel Rahman

BYLINE: Bill O'Reilly

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

O'REILLY: In the "Impact" segment tonight, Vice President Cheney has just arrived back in Washington. We don't know if he made any progress in stopping the Palestinians and Israelis from killing each other. Today another suicide bombing killed at least three in Jerusalem. That comes on the heels of a bombing yesterday which killed seven Israelis.

With us now is the PLO representative in America, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

Can the authority, the Palestinian Authority, control these suicide bombers?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REP. TO THE UNITED STATES: They would like to.

O'REILLY: But they can't.

RAHMAN: They can not under the present circumstances, for the very simple reason, you have the Israeli army in control of every single town, village, of the West Bank. They are settling them, they are imposing collective punishment

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on the Palestinians. There is a feeling of...

O'REILLY: All right.

RAHMAN: ... desperation...

(CROSSTALK)

O'REILLY: But it seems to me...

RAHMAN: ... hopelessness...

O'REILLY: ... that it's -- I got it...

RAHMAN: ... of the Palestinians...

O'REILLY: We all know the hopelessness.

RAHMAN: Yes, but (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

O'REILLY: It seems to me that if the PLO...

RAHMAN: ... important.

O'REILLY: ... authority, 50,000 policemen in the Palestinian areas, worked with the Israelis, you could control these people.

RAHMAN: If they have the logistics to do it. But that's why it is important to look at the situation as a whole. If the police cannot move from one street to the other because there is an Israeli military checkpoint, if the policeman does not have a vehicle because his vehicle has been destroyed, if he does not

have a building, if he doesn't have...

O'REILLY: He doesn't have a vehicle? You guys don't have vehicles?

RAHMAN: No, no, because...

O'REILLY: What -- where's the \$900,000 -- million that we gave you after the...

RAHMAN: ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE) -- (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

O'REILLY: ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE)?

RAHMAN: ... by the way, Mr. O'Reilly, you did not give not even \$100 million. You didn't give \$1 million to the Palestinians.

O'REILLY: OK, well -- we were billed...

RAHMAN: So, yes, (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

O'REILLY: ... the taxpayer was billed according to the GAO...

RAHMAN: Yes, well, they (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

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O'REILLY: ... \$900 million.

RAHMAN: ... ask your government where did it go. But it was not -- did not come to us --

O'REILLY: You didn't get it?

RAHMAN: To the Palestinian Authority. We did not take one penny in cash from the United States.

O'REILLY: After the Wye Agreement, you didn't get any money?

RAHMAN: Not one dollar in cash. It was some projects that were made, building some schools, building some irrigation...

O'REILLY: And the police, training the police.

RAHMAN: No. Very little, maybe less than a million dollars.

O'REILLY: Our ledger sheet here in the United States says, Palestinian Authority, \$900 million after Wye.

RAHMAN: That is -- go back and look at the fine prints, and you will find that it was not given to us.

O'REILLY: All right. So you don't have enough vehicles, you don't have enough...

RAHMAN: Not only -- not because we did not have. We had them. But in the last 18 months, Israel systematically...

O'REILLY: Destroyed them.

(CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: ... targeted the police vehicles and the police buildings.

O'REILLY: Are you saying to me, Mr. Rahman, that if you had the facilities and if you had the equipment, you could control these bombers?

RAHMAN: Yes, plus...

O'REILLY: You have the will to control them?

RAHMAN: Yes, yes, yes, yes. Plus, if the Israeli army is not attacking our people.

O'REILLY: All right. But Cheney's just got back, they withdrew from Bethlehem, they're withdrawing from most of the places that you want them to withdraw from...

RAHMAN: To the outskirts. They encircle the city. They moved from the center of the city...

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O'REILLY: They're moving back, they're moving back.

RAHMAN: But they are still imposing curfews and siege on people. People cannot walk.

O'REILLY: But Mr. Rahman, put yourself in the Israelis' place.

RAHMAN: I would not be there if I was an Israeli.
O'REILLY: If every single -- All right.
RAHMAN: Because (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...
O'REILLY: If every single day of the week, seven of your citizens are getting blown to pieces, of course you're going to have a curfew, of course...
RAHMAN: But...
O'REILLY: ... you're going to have tough security.
RAHMAN: But, you know, you have to ask yourself, why a young Palestinian...
O'REILLY: No, I don't.
RAHMAN: ... become a -- I do have, I do have...
O'REILLY: No, I don't! That's the same reasoning of why would they crash into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon...
RAHMAN: No, no, that's (UNINTELLIGIBLE).
O'REILLY: ... I don't care.
RAHMAN: That's -- I care, because those are my people.
O'REILLY: That's fine. But they're killing innocent people.
RAHMAN: Because they are being killed...
(CROSSTALK)
O'REILLY: ... on the other side.
RAHMAN: ... by the Israelis. They are killing Israelis because...
O'REILLY: It's not justifiable.
RAHMAN: It is!
O'REILLY: It's not -- no, you can't kill...
RAHMAN: It is not (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...
O'REILLY: ... babies and say it's...
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RAHMAN: I am not say -- I am...
O'REILLY: ... justified.
RAHMAN: ... not saying justifying. But I can understand what makes a man become a suicide bomber.
O'REILLY: I can understand it, too.
RAHMAN: He was not born as a suicide bomber.
O'REILLY: I can understand the fanaticism, too.
RAHMAN: It is not fanaticism.
O'REILLY: Sure it is. Anybody that blows them self up...
RAHMAN: It is not, it's...
O'REILLY: ... is a fanatic.
RAHMAN: But listen...
O'REILLY: Of course it is.
RAHMAN: ... if you are stripped naked in front of your children and tied down and blindfolded and numbers are (UNINTELLIGIBLE), and your wife is being humiliated by the Israelis, wouldn't you fight back?
O'REILLY: Yes, I would, but I wouldn't...
RAHMAN: OK. What...
O'REILLY: ... kill babies...
RAHMAN: ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...
O'REILLY: ... in the process.
RAHMAN: ... then they kill themselves in the process, and that makes me believe...
O'REILLY: They kill babies and...
RAHMAN: ... they kill...
O'REILLY: ... little children.
RAHMAN: Yes, of course, we say no to this. We are against it.

O'REILLY: That's what I mean, but you got to say no...

RAHMAN: We are...

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O'REILLY: ... without the conditions.

RAHMAN: No, it is without conditions. But I'm trying to tell you, my saying no is not sufficient. You have to change their behavior.

O'REILLY: Well, first you have to stop them...

RAHMAN: Well...

O'REILLY: ... and then you have to change their behavior.

RAHMAN: ... I can not stop them.

O'REILLY: Why not...

RAHMAN: (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

O'REILLY: ... if you banded together with...

RAHMAN: Because, because, because...

O'REILLY: ... the Israelis and worked together...

RAHMAN: ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE) -- because, because...

O'REILLY: ... you could stop them.

RAHMAN: ... because Israel move 30,000 soldiers and 500 tanks and arrested 4,000 people and could not stop it.

O'REILLY: All right. Sounds to me like...

RAHMAN: (UNINTELLIGIBLE).

O'REILLY: ... this is never going to stop, and I think it's, I think it's a shame.

RAHMAN: It -- it is going to stop only when, when the Israelis respect the right of the Palestinian to live as a free people...

O'REILLY: All right. I just hope...

RAHMAN: ... in their own state.

O'REILLY: ... look, you guys know what's happening, you -- I think you're a good man, you want to stop the killings.

RAHMAN: Of course I want to.

O'REILLY: You got to give a little bit, you've got to give a little bit.

RAHMAN: We want to give a little bit.

O'REILLY: All right. Mr. Rahman, nice to see you.

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RAHMAN: Thank you.

O'REILLY: And we'll be right back as THE FACTOR continues from Washington.

LOAD-DATE: July 10, 2003

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CNNFN

SHOW: MONEYLINE 06:00 PM Eastern Standard Time

March 19, 2002 Tuesday

Transcript # 031901cb.110

SECTION: Business

LENGTH: 8020 words

HEADLINE: LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE; CNNfn

GUESTS: Hasan Rahman, Alon Pinkas, Manuel Johnson, Michael Puntoriero, Katherine Scherer, Kemile Palmer

BYLINE: Lou Dobbs, John King, Bruce Francis, Peter Viles, Wolf Blitzer

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

LOU DOBBS, CNNfn ANCHOR, LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE: Tonight, the Israelis and Palestinians say a truce will be called as soon as tomorrow. Israel's consul general, Ambassador Alon Pinkas, Palestinian representative Hasan Rahman will join us to tell us how they will achieve peace.

We'll also be joined by several employees of Andersen, as their company under Justice Department indictment fights for its very survival. We'll hear their thoughts on the government's action, their company's prospects for survival and their own.

And tonight, a special report on the Catholic Church, mired in an ugly child sex molestation scandal, paying millions of dollars to victims of molestation. Tonight, we'll tell you where those millions are coming from and how many billions more will be required.

ANNOUNCER: This is LOU DOBBS MONEYLINE for Tuesday, March 19. Here now, Lou Dobbs.

DOBBS: Good evening.

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MONEYLINE 06:00 PM Eastern Standard Time March 19, 2002 Tuesday Vice President Dick Cheney says he's willing to meet with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, but only after Arafat implements a ceasefire agreement drawn up by CIA Director George Tenet. The vice president says it will be up to U.S. special envoy Anthony Zinni to determine whether Arafat meets the conditions of those ceasefire requirements.

Vice President Cheney today traveled to Turkey on the last stop of his 11-nation Middle East trip. John King is traveling with the vice president and joins us now from Ankora, Turkey -- John.

JOHN KING, CNN SR. WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT: And, Lou, a very busy final full day of the vice president's trip. He is here in Turkey to get back to his initial mission: try to build support for a possible U.S. military confrontation with Saddam Hussein.

In conversations with the Turkish prime minister tonight, we are told Mr. Cheney said such a decision is still weeks if not a few months down the road, but he did try to seek support for use of air bases here, if it comes to that, another military confrontation with Saddam Hussein.

It is a very controversial issue here. And there were some protests in the street as the vice president arrived. Ten years of sanctions on Iraq have taken an economic toll here in neighboring Turkey. There also is a concern that a military effort against Iraq could split the country in half and that the Kurds in the north would take some power and perhaps cause political trouble for Turkey along its southern border. Still, U.S. officials say they believe those talks went well and they came, as you noted at the top of the show, after a dramatic day for the vice president in Jerusalem.

This morning, more conversations with the prime minister, Ariel Sharon. And under U.S. pressure, Israel pulling back from five locations to which it had deployed troops over the past two weeks. Also saying that if Yasser Arafat agrees to a truce, it will allow him to leave the Palestinian territories and go to that Arab Summit next week in Beirut.

And then, the vice president dangled an initiative of his own. He says he will return to the region, perhaps as early as next week, for the first high-level one-on-one meeting. The vice president meeting Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, but Mr. Cheney did attach some conditions.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DICK CHENEY, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Namely, to speak to his own people personally about the importance of ending violence and terrorism, to issue clear instructions to his security services, to enforce the ceasefire and to follow up closely these efforts to ensure implementation of the Tenet work plan.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Initial Palestinian reaction quite favorable. Israeli sources saying a truce could be in place within days. U.S. officials welcoming that not only because they hope it brings an end to 18 months of tragic bloodshed between the Israelis and the Palestinians, but they also believe that if there is calm in

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the Palestinian territories, relative peace between the Israelis and Palestinians as they move forward into some form of political process, perhaps the vice president and the president, when they have a second round of consultations with Arab leaders about a possible confrontation with Saddam Hussein, will get a more favorable hearing -- Lou.

DOBBS: John, on the issue of the breakthrough, the apparent breakthrough, is it your sense as you travel with the vice president through the region, that there is support within the region for a ceasefire and for the proposals that are being obviously driven by the vice president and Anthony Zinni?

KING: Certainly, support for a ceasefire and most...

DOBBS: We apologize. We have just lost the satellite audio from Ankara, Turkey. John King reporting as he travels with the vice president. Important news, an apparent breakthrough and the vice president making significant overtures to the Palestinians and the Israelis for further U.S. engagement in trying to achieve a ceasefire in the Middle East.

A leading Palestinian negotiator welcomed the vice president's offer to meet with Yasser Arafat, saying he hoped a deal could be struck soon to implement the Tenet plan. But some Israeli leaders say Arafat is not to be trusted and has already shown he's incapable of stopping violence.

Joining me now on this issue, Ambassador Alon Pinkas of Israel; Hasan Rahman, Palestinian representative to the United States. Gentlemen, good to have you here. Let me begin, if I may, Mr. Rahman, with a straightforward question. Do you feel more optimistic than the last time you and I talked about two weeks ago?

HASAN RAHMAN, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO U.S.: Well, we were hopeful that the efforts of General Zinni would lead to the implementation of the Tenet understandings and Mitchell Report and lead us into a political horizon. In fact, we are working very closely with Mr. Zinni. Tomorrow, we will present our own proposals for the implementation of Tenet and Mitchell. And we hope that the Israelis will reciprocate and withdraw their troops from the areas they occupy because they have not completed their withdrawal yet.

DOBBS: As you know...

RAHMAN: And we will move into that phase.

DOBBS: Well, that sounds encouraging. And if I may turn to you, Ambassador Pinkas. The last time we talked, again about two weeks ago, you said and reminded all of us that Ariel Sharon is a pragmatic man. Is this a demonstration of his pragmatism and are you more hopeful tonight?

ALON PINKAS, AMBASSADOR CONSUL GENERAL OF ISRAEL: Well, I'm more hopeful tonight because I think the combination of General Zinni's mission and the trip or the visit by Vice President Cheney has convinced the Palestinians that they have very little to achieve and very little to show for a year and a half worth of violence.

I still think that the Prime Minister Sharon is pragmatic. I think that he

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MONEYLINE 06:00 PM Eastern Standard Time March 19, 2002 Tuesday has demonstrated that in both declaring several months ago a unilateral ceasefire that would unfortunately was not complied by the Palestinians, then moving on to waive the seven-day quiet condition. Although, I have to tell you in all honesty, that it makes so much sense to have seven days of quiet before entering negotiations, but let bygones be bygones. And then, moving out the military, withdrawing from major Palestinian cities. And finally, allowing Arafat to leave Ramallah.

Now, I have to tell you that I'm also encouraged, very much encouraged, by what my colleague, Abdel Rahman, said a moment ago, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, that the Palestinians will tomorrow present a plan to General Zinni because that, if my recollection does not mislead me, that is the first time since 1947 that the Palestinians are presenting something in terms of reaching some political settlement. Until now, they have been content and resigned to say no to everything that's been proposed to him.

DOBBS: Mr. Rahman?

RAHMAN: Well, I'm disappointed always with Mr. Pinkas because he likes to go back, take us back to history. And we have our own version of history also. I don't think that the Israelis are totally innocent and they are the saints. You have to look at what the Secretary-General Kofi Annan said today about the outrageous behavior of the Israelis. So...

DOBBS: Mr. Rahman...

RAHMAN: Yes, if you allow me just because -- I was not going really to get into that, but Mr. Pinkas takes us into certain areas that represents, in my views, distortion of the facts, the version of history...

DOBBS: Mr. Rahman, I appreciate it. But in the interest at least of the audience of this broadcast, is there -- the last time you and I talked, you said that the way to peace here is through full engagement, led by the United States. Is the action of the United States government, through its representatives, Vice President Dick Cheney, General Zinni, would you say that we are now -- and of course the United Nations Resolution, and the leadership of Kofi Annan. If this is not full engagement, what could it be?

RAHMAN: No. We are saying yes, we welcome the efforts of the United States, the engagement of the United States, and we are hopeful that with the efforts of General Zinni and the engagement of Vice President Cheney and the engagement of President Bush that they will lead us into a political horizon that will end Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories and lead to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza, next to Israel, living in peace with the state of Israel.

DOBBS: Let me ask both of you gentlemen, if I may. Do you have the sense that as you -- just both of you are about to embark upon a reconstruction of your history, a bloody history, that the world community is no longer trusting of either the Israelis or the Palestinians to be responsible for writing the future history of the region, that it is now a time for sober, balanced judgment and the creation of a workable peace, whether you call it a peace process, whether you call it a ceasefire, but a real and profound peace in the region? Do you both have that sense?

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RAHMAN: If you allow me, the foundation of a permanent and lasting peace were set in Madrid. It is the implementation of Resolution 242, 338, land for peace.

Israel will withdraw from all the territories that it occupied in 1967 in exchange for full peace with Israel. This is the foundation of any future settlement. There's an international consensus on that. I don't believe there's anyone in this world who is opposed to those principles. I want to hear my colleague, Mr. Pinkas, say that he accepts those principles and he joins the international consensus. So we can -- his people and my people live in two separate states next to each other in peace.

DOBBS: You've said what you want to hear. Let's hear what Mr. Pinkas, Ambassador Pinkas wants us to hear.

PINKAS: Well, if only Mr. Arafat spoke like Mr. Abdel Rahman, perhaps we would have had a peace agreement by now. Everything you have referred to, Lou, in your description or delineation on how a peace agreement would look like, was presented at Camp David. The reason Mr. Rahman doesn't like me drawing him or delving into history is because he knows history is replete with examples how they missed opportunities, to miss opportunities.

Now, into the future, it's very simple. It's not about occupation. It's not about Resolution 242. It's about the ability and the willingness of the Palestinian leadership to A: accept an Israeli state as a Jewish state; two, accept Israel's rights to exist; three, be realistic and forget this impractical, unreasonable and unrealistic dream that you have cultivated generations called the right of return. And No. 4, set up a viable state with procedures, with due diligence, with the rule and supremacy of law, with a viable economy. All of the above have been the foundations of a peace process that yes, began in Madrid, but more so continued on in Oslo.

Ever since -- ever since Camp David was put on the table, Lou, all we have seen from the Palestinians is reverting into 1960s and 1950s rhetoric of hatred, anti-Semitism, anti-Americanism. And Mr. Abdel Rahman is talking about 1991, the Madrid conference. Let me remind you, Lou, that the Madrid conference...

RAHMAN: If you allow me...

(CROSSTALK)

PINKAS: One last sentence. The Madrid conference followed the Gulf War, in which Saddam Hussein, the virtuous leader, the great leader, was supported by one people in the Middle East, and those are the Palestinians, led by one leader, and that is Yasser Arafat. So you need to make a lot of corrections and a lot...

(CROSSTALK)

DOBBS: Ambassador, if we may, Mr. Rahman, please.

RAHMAN: First of all, what you are saying, Mr. Pinkas, is absolutely wrong. You are telling us what we need to do, but you have not said what Israel needs to do. I said...

PINKAS: (UNINTELLIGIBLE) Camp David.

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RAHMAN: I talked to -- I said to you that we want a state on the West Bank and Gaza, next to Israel, living in peace with...

PINKAS: You had it at Camp David.

RAHMAN: Forget about Camp David.

PINKAS: Why? Why? Because it's uncomfortable?

DOBBS: Ambassador, please.

RAHMAN: You know why? Because in Camp David -- what you are saying about Camp

David is totally inaccurate. Totally inaccurate.

DOBBS: Gentlemen, if I could say, is it -- despite the rhetoric and the expressions, rather contentious ones even here as we're trying to talk about what you will do to achieve peace, is it your judgment that the framework is now in place and the world community's insistence is now clearly understood on the part of both the Palestinians and the Israelis, that intractability that is the hallmark of your history, whichever of you writes it over the past 50 years, from your perspective, is no longer acceptable, and that that you are going to have to find, pragmatically, a new way to build a future and to live together? (CROSSTALK)

RAHMAN: We have accepted and we continue to accept the right of Israel to exist within the 1967 boundaries.

PINKAS: No, you haven't.

RAHMAN: Israel -- I'm saying and we did, and we signed to it. And I want Mr. Pinkas to say that he accepts to live within an Israel that is established and continues to exist over the 1967 boundaries. Don't come to me back with...

DOBBS: OK. Mr. Rahman, let the ambassador answer. Are you willing to do that, Mr. Ambassador?

PINKAS: Lou, we have said many times that we have no interests in controlling the lives of 3.2 million Palestinians. We have said many times following 1967 and then again in the last two years and especially in the last year and a half...

RAHMAN: But you did not answer the question.

PINKAS: Well, when I answer your questions, it will be a great day, Mr. Abdel Rahman, but wait for my answer. I'm answering Mr. Dobbs' questions.

I don't think the conflict is intractable. In fact, the framework is there.

It's Madrid. The internal framework is Oslo. The contours are Camp David and the roadmap is the Tenet plan and especially the Mitchell Report. I know I'm speaking in codes for your viewership, perhaps...

DOBBS: Oh, we have a very, very sophisticated viewership, Mr. Ambassador.

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PINKAS: I know you do. That's why I feel comfortable saying that. The fact of the matter is, this is not about which plan to accept. This is about a total bankruptcy of the Palestinian leadership. This is -- everything that Mr. Abdel Rahman is saying now is not taught in Palestinian schools. It is not preached in Palestinian mosques and is not stated or expounded by Palestinian...

RAHMAN: I want to know what you teach your children in your schools.

DOBBS: Gentlemen, I think if there is any demonstration of what General Zinni, the vice president, are up against as they try to work with both sides in coming to some pragmatic, profound resolution to the Middle East, you've amply demonstrated that. I thank you for taking the time to try to share your view of how you will work to achieve peace, and I wish both of you and both sides all of the very best as you try to write a far better history.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

DOBBS: Thank you, gentlemen.

PINKAS: Thank you, Lou.

DOBBS: Still ahead, judgment day for Carly Fiorina and Michael Capellas.

Hewlett-Packard (Company: Hewlett-Packard Company ; Ticker: HWP ; URL: <http://www.hp.com>) optimistic about the merger plan with Compaq (Company: Compaq Computer Corporation; Ticker: CPQ; URL: <http://www.compaq.com/>). We'll have the very latest for you from California, the site of today's Hewlett-Packard shareholders' meeting.

Andersen's overseas units moving closer to being part of KPMG as its U.S.

employees search for survival. We'll hear what some of Andersen's employees are thinking and feeling, live here next on MONEYLINE.

And stocks end higher on the New York Stock Exchange and over at the Nasdaq. We will tell you about that as well in just moments. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DOBBS: The Fed today, as expected, held short-term interest rates unchanged, 1 3/4 percent. Today, also, the first time that the Fed dropped its warning about a recession, the first time in more than a year. That leaves the door open for possible interest rate hikes some say later this year.

On Wall Street, the markets gained ahead of the Fed's decision. Those stocks did dip slightly in the final hour of trading. Also on investor minds today, that shareholder vote at Hewlett-Packard. The major markets finishing higher. The Dow gaining 57 points. The Nasdaq up nearly four points. The S&P 500 up nearly five points.

Among the most widely held issues, Procter & Gamble (Company: The Procter & Gamble Company; Ticker: PG ; URL: <http://www.pg.com/>) up more than \$2 a share, increasing its forecast for the year. Delta Air Lines (Company: Delta Air Lines Inc.; Ticker: DAL; URL: <http://www.delta-air.com/>) down a dollar. Delta expects to report a quarterly loss of at least \$350 million. Merrill Lynch (Company: Merrill Lynch & Co. Inc.; Ticker: MER; URL: <http://www.ml.com/>) today gained a

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\$1.50 a share. Bank of America Securities initiated coverage with a strong buy. General Motors (Company: General Motors Corporation; Ticker: GM; URL: <http://www.gm.com/>) down fractionally. That after reaffirming its earnings targets.

Checking some of the other movers on Wall Street, Goldman Sachs (Company: The Goldman Sachs Group Inc.; Ticker: GS; URL: <http://www.gs.com/>) today gaining nearly \$2 a share. The firm's net down 32 percent. Profits better than expected however. Gemstar-TV Guide (Company: Gemstar-TV Guide International Inc.; Ticker: GMST; URL: <http://www.tvguideinc.com/>) down more than \$5 a share, losing a quarter of its value. The company reported a fourth-quarter loss. It's co-president and chief operating officer resigned. Accenture (Company: Accenture Ltd.; Ticker: ACN; URL: <http://www.accenture.com/>) today down more than \$3 a share. The consulting firm that split off from Andersen said it will sell its minority ownership interests that could hurt its earnings.

Hewlett-Packard claiming victory tonight in the bitter proxy fight for control of Compaq Computer. But with shareholder ballots now in, those opposing the \$21 billion merger say the battle is still too close to call. Whatever the outcome, today's vote gives individual investors a rare opportunity, the opportunity to decide the fate of two business giants, if not an entire industry. Bruce Francis reports from Cupertino, California.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BRUCE FRANCIS, CNNfn CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Calling the margin slim but sufficient, Hewlett-Packard's CEO Carly Fiorina declared victory in what has been the most rancorous contested merger in corporate history.

CARLY FIORINA, CEO, HEWLETT-PACKARD: Given the choice between embracing the future of our industry or attempting to preserve the status quo, it appears that our shareowners today have made a decision not only to embrace that change, but to lead it.

FRANCIS: Walter Hewlett's last-minute appeal was to preserve a unique vision of what an American corporation can be, maintaining that HP is not a company in crisis. The Hewlett and Packard families and their foundations control about 18 percent of the vote. Hewlett derided the deal as a \$25 billion mistake. He's

optimistic he can still kill it.

WALTER HEWLETT, HEWLETT-PACKARD BOARD MEMBER: The results of today's votes are too close to call. And a proxy contest this close where stockholders are changing their votes right up to the closing of the polls, it is simply impossible to determine the outcome at this time.

FRANCIS: Fiorina says that a solid majority of the non-family institutions backed the deal. Shareholders attending the meeting, many employees or retirees seemed mostly on Hewlett's side. Hewlett received a standing ovation from the crowd.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: I think it's a fabulous company. I just think there are better options than mergers of that size.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Compaq has got enough problems as it is right now and I

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think HP should focus on their core values.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

FRANCIS (on camera): Tomorrow in Houston, Compaq shareholders are expected to overwhelmingly approve the deal. But today's close HP tally means that management won't be able to close this deal as they had hoped to during the first week of April -- Lou.

DOBBS: And how are people taking it that Carly Fiorina says close or not, they've won?

FRANCIS: She says that it will -- that this is not a political contest. She only needs to win by one vote. But the crowd here today was definitely Walter Hewlett's crowd, Lou. Fiorina was booed at times, especially when she asserted that employees were behind this deal. It was a tough sell at this meeting and it's been a tough sell overall -- Lou.

DOBBS: And I suppose the best news of all is it's almost at an end.

Bruce, thanks.

FRANCIS: I have to agree be you there.

DOBBS: Bruce Francis from Cupertino.

Well, like Enron, Andersen's name has been tainted with scandal. Andersen's overseas partners are now on the defensive, emphasizing it was the U.S. firm that was indicted. And anxious to rid itself of the Andersen name, the firm's non-U.S. operations eager to advance merger plans with KPMG.

There is a huge hurdle, however. Regulatory authorities still have to sign off the deal and the European commission over the past has been resistant to mergers of professional services firms.

The scandal surrounding Andersen, it's former client, Enron, has done more to raise red flags about corporate governance than any other issue in years. Many say the growing questions about auditing standards in this country can be only addressed by firm action in Congress, possibly a move to the international accounting standards. Joining me now is Manuel Johnson. He is the chairman of the Financial Accounting Foundation. It oversees the FASB. He's also, of course, a former vice chairman of the Federal Reserve. Manuel, it's good to have you here.

MANUEL JOHNSON, CHAIRMAN, FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING FOUNDATION: Thank you, Lou. Nice to be here.

DOBBS: I have got to ask you, at this point, first off, is the foundation going to make significant changes before Congress forces those changes?

JOHNSON: Well, the foundation is reviewing what it can do to improve the quality of financial accounting standards setting. As you know, we oversee the Financial Accounting Standards Board. And, you know, in our opinion, the accounting standards have not really been the major problem. The accounting

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standards are very sound when properly applied. I think there is an issue with the auditing process and with the integrity of some companies in following the standard setting, but...

DOBBS: You know, every CEO I have talked with, Manuel, gives me a different answer, and nearly every chief financial officer. They talk about the fundamental difference between the international standards board and FASB. The fact that we are more about rules and legal-based and the international board far more principle-based. And there seems to be a great deal of interest in change. You don't sense that or agree with that?

JOHNSON: Well, yes, I think there's an interest in trying to bring together the capital markets in Europe and the U.S. with a common set of standards that are of high quality so that investors in the capital markets can trust the information they have about companies that they invest in.

But that does not mean necessarily that the U.S. should compromise its standards towards a weaker common denominator. And I think that's the one of the things that the FAF wants to make sure that we don't do. We certainly want to simplify the process, streamline it, make it work as best we can to make our capital markets the most efficient in the world. But at the same time, we don't want them to compromise quality in order to allow integration at a weaker common denominator.

DOBBS: So you really believe that the International Accounting Standards Board has a weaker, less qualitative approach than you?

JOHNSON: Well, I think the thing there is that it's new. The ISC and its organization is really just recently been established as an independent accounting setting body. They're working very hard under the direction of Paul Volcker as head of the board of trustees in this organization to produce a high quality set of accounting standards. And we have confidence that that's eventually going to happen under his direction with an independent accounting standard setting group.

DOBBS: Well, you know, it's interesting true though, as we talk about this issue sort of in the abstract here, perhaps too abstract for a moment. Nearly every CFO I talk with as well says that in the case of Enron, and the numbers that Andersen was auditing, that there are so many interpretations of those rules under FASB that one could make a reasonable case on nearly any side of the issue, and that we've become such a litigious country and that the FASB is dictated by such an aggressive plaintiff's bar, the trial lawyer's association that there's very little that can be done quickly. Do you agree with that?

JOHNSON: No, I don't. I think FASB over the last few years has a very good record of approving accounting standards that are relevant to the changes in the marketplace. But at the same time, there is more that can be done. That's one of the reasons why the Accounting Foundation Board of Trustees has recently proposed reducing the size of the FASB board from seven to five with a simple majority vote for approval of the standard, and have asked the FASB to look into ways to speed up the public comment period in which they consider new standards. And we think that that can help streamline the process. But the fact of the matter is FASB has worked very hard under pressure from various interest groups to slow it down.

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DOBBS: I'm sorry to interrupt you. We're going to have to end there. And I hope you'll come back soon to discuss these very important issues on financial reporting in this country. Obviously, the model is under attack, and reform

being urged in many quarters. I do like the concept of a nimble FASB. I'm not sure I've come to terms with the concept yet, but it's an interesting concept.

Manuel Johnson...

JOHNSON: We're working on it, Lou.

DOBBS: Good to have you here.

JOHNSON: Thank you.

DOBBS: Well, later here, we'll be focusing, of course, on Andersen. And we'll hear from some of the people who work for Andersen, some of the people who had nothing to do with Enron, but who stand tonight in prospect of losing their jobs.

These three employees will be here tonight to share their thoughts on the government's criminal indictment against Andersen, its fairness, how they feel about their futures and their company's chances for survival.

Coming up next, new details on the huge sums of money that the Catholic Church may have to pay out over the growing sex molestation scandal. We'll have a special report for you on that. And fighting back, Andersen's employees tell us what they think of the Justice Department's decision to indict their firm. That live discussion coming up next. And a wall of rain drenching the South, more people lose their lives. We'll have the latest on that story for you as well. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DOBBS: Last night, we asked you for your opinion on the Justice Department decision to indict Andersen as a firm. Tonight, we have the result of that poll for you. To the question, should the Department of Justice have indicted Andersen, 70 percent of you said no, 30 percent agreed with the Justice Department decision.

Onto Enron's future, 60 percent of you said Enron should be indicted as a firm, 40 percent said no. And finally, an overwhelming 97 percent voted that responsible executives at each firm should be individually indicted.

The 28,000 employees of Andersen in the United States could soon be on their own, lose their jobs if the overseas units of the firm succeed in breaking away, the Justice Department's indictment hanging over their business, their prospects at best look uncertain and their hopes for a recovery are sure to be damaged by the continued drain of big name clients. To assess the mood in the firm and to put a human face on what is a business tragedy by any standard, we are joined by three of Andersen's employees from all around the country.

Michael Puntoriero joins us tonight from Los Angeles. Katherine Scherer is in our Chicago Bureau, and Kemile Palmer joins us tonight from Washington, D.C.

Thank you all for being here. We really appreciate it. I guess, let me begin if

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I may, Mike, with you. When you learned that the firm had been indicted and an indictment is a death sentence for those who do not know for a professional services firm. What was your reaction?

MICHAEL PUNTORIERO, ANDERSEN: Well I think, Lou, probably the first reaction was anger, anger that our government could take an action against 85,000 people around the world, 26,000 people in the United States, 300 of which work for me in Orange County, the vast, vast majority of which had absolutely nothing to do with this.

DOBBS: Did you ever work on the Enron account?

PUNTORIERO: No, I did not.

DOBBS: Did anybody in your office work on the Enron account who works for you?

PUNTORIERO: No, they did not. No.

DOBBS: Are you angry with Andersen's management as well?

PUNTORIERO: No, I think, Lou, our number one objective is to do the best thing we can, given the situation we're in, for our people and our clients. Andersen, everyone needs to understand, is like a family and we need to take care of that family like anyone would want to take care of their family, and we need to take care of our clients.

So, how we behave around the world is going to be in a way we think is in the best interest of those groups. It's just unfortunate that we got in the position we're in and it's a tragedy the impact it's going to have on the 26,000, especially the 26,000 people in the United States.

DOBBS: Who had nothing to do with Enron at all.

PUNTORIERO: (INAUDIBLE).

DOBBS: Kathy, let me turn to you there in Chicago. What are your thoughts tonight?

KATHERINE SCHERER, ANDERSEN: Well I think, Lou, I like many of my partners and all of the employees here in the U.S., as Mike said, we have been through a lot of stages with this, almost like a death. I think we started out in denial.

It went to anger, and now you know we're at the stages of resolve. We've got the cards that we've been dealt and right now, we're doing what we can to try to hold the firm, or at least the biggest pieces of the firm that we can together and do the best thing for our people, because as Mike said we truly are a family here, and amazingly people are still hanging with it, even in the face of this indictment.

DOBBS: Kemile, let me turn to you. You're there in the Washington office. You're very close to the epicenter of this indictment. The mood there in the office there in Washington?

KEMILE PALMER, ANDERSEN: I believe everyone is just trying, we're just trying
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MONEYLINE 06:00 PM Eastern Standard Time March 19, 2002 Tuesday to keep our heads up. Of course, we're scared you know. We don't know what's going to happen and that's the main thing. We just, we want to know you know that our livelihood is going to be taken care of, that we're going to have jobs in the future. So I believe everyone is concerned about that.

DOBBS: And I should ask this, have any of you met one another, the three of you?

PALMER: No, we haven't.

SCHERER: We haven't met.

DOBBS: Well, we're going to continue to introduce you to the audience here tonight, if you will sit still and bear with us while we take a quick break.

We'll return to talk about your thoughts going forward. Stay forward.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DOBBS: We're back now with Andersen employees, Michael Puntoriero in Los Angeles; Katherine Scherer in Chicago; and Kemile Palmer in Washington.

Let me ask you, what are you all going to do? You've been effectively given a death sentence by the Justice Department, your firm has. Your jobs are all but on the verge of being lost. Are you going to fight back? Are you going to simply acquiesce?

PALMER: I know definitely we're going to fight back.

DOBBS: How are you going to do it?

PALMER: Well, I know that our group in the Washington, D.C. area, we're actually trying to get a rally together for late this week to, you know, go - we haven't decided yet where it's going to be, but we're all getting together and hopefully it will be over 1,000 of us strong, you know, letting the Department of Justice know that, you know, we're not, you know, we're not just going to

stand by and we want to fight this.

DOBBS: And Mike in Los Angeles?

PUNTORIERO: I would echo those words, Lou. We are moving forward as hard as we can with talking to our clients, assuring them that we're still in business.

In my small office in Orange County, California, we have not lost any clients over this matter, or people for that matter. They are I'm sure sitting there tonight.

DOBBS: How do you all feel? Obviously not very happy with the Justice Department to say the least, how do you feel about those clients with which Andersen has had in some cases more than three decades relationship with, just walking away from Andersen? Any animosity?

PUNTORIERO: Lou, none of them are my clients.

SCHERER: Actually I think we feel sad about that, Lou.

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DOBBS: I'm sorry. Kathy.

SCHERER: Yes, I think you know certainly we feel sad about that, Lou, and we feel a loss about that. But, you know, each client has to make up their own minds and their own decisions about what's best for their companies, and I just want to say to the clients that we do have out there that we are hanging with you guys. We appreciate you hanging with us, and we are sticking in there and are going to be there for you.

DOBBS: I should point out, not only obviously to each of you, but also to our audience, that we sought a representative from the Department of Justice, everyone from the Attorney General on down at the Justice Department to talk about Andersen and the equity or the lack of equity in its decision to indict a firm, and perhaps cost 85,000 jobs. But the Justice Department did not see fit to return our phone calls on the invitation, let alone respond to the invitation, but I just wanted to get that out.

Do you really believe there's a political base anywhere in Washington that will defend Andersen? Are you - do you know of a single Congressman or Senator who's willing to support you in what you're seeking?

PUNTORIERO: Lou, I'll jump in on that one. I don't know what the motivations are of the DOJ, Department of Justice. I do know though that it just seems totally unjust to punish, at a minimum to turn their lives upside down, 85,000 people around the world. I don't know why the Justice Department would do that. I don't know why they would take action to indict the firm and not take any action against any individuals, either at Enron or with us quite honestly, but sought to indict the company.

DOBBS: How does that make you feel about your government? Kathy.

SCHERER: I think right now where we're at, Lou, is we are not focusing on the government. As I said earlier, we've got the cards that we've been dealt and right now the key thing that's going on inside the walls of the Chicago office and throughout the U.S. and the firm worldwide is, we're focusing on our people and trying to assure them that we are still going to be there, that we are still a great place to do great work, and we are still reaching out to our clients to let them know that we are there and we still want to continue to do their business, and that really -

PUNTORIERO: Lou, I would echo Kathy's - I would echo Kathy's comments.

DOBBS: Kemile, we're going to give you the last word.

PALMER: And I also want to say to put a face to the 26,000 people. We're a great firm and I've always enjoyed it. I've been there almost three years and I've enjoyed my time working here and I just want, you know, the public to see us as, you know, the individuals that we are, and that we're not just Andersen,

and hopefully don't think that, you know. I think we should put Andersen out there. They think that all of us were out there shredding documents and it wasn't like that at all, and we're the innocent that are affected by this.

DOBBS: Kemile Palmer, thank you very much.

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PALMER: Thank you.

DOBBS: Katherine Scherer.

SCHERER: Thank you, Lou.

DOBBS: Michael Puntoriero, thank you very much for being with us.

PUNTORIERO: Thank you, Lou.

PALMER: Thanks.

DOBBS: Coming up next, there's been no let up in the flooding in the south, more lives are lost, more property destroyed. We'll have the details for you in just a moment. And in their words tonight, the president says he's no number cruncher, but that didn't stop him from telling us just exactly what's wrong with the economy. We'll have the President's view right after the break.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DOBBS: The sex molestation scandal now enveloping the Catholic Church in America has already cost the church dearly in dollars, and the anger of its parishioners and the shame of its defrocked priests. Now details are emerging about the financial cost of the Catholic Church. Peter Viles has the report.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: He raised Lazarus from the dead.

PETER VILES, CNNfn CORRESPONDENT (voice over): In Boston, in New York City, it is a front page scandal, the Catholic Church paying tens of millions to settle claims of child abuse by priests. It is a scandal years in the making and it is national, not regional.

In the mid '90s, the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, driven to the brink of bankruptcy by sex abuse settlements, estimated at \$40 to \$50 million. In 1997, the Diocese of Dallas also faced bankruptcy unable to pay \$119 million jury award in a sex abuse case. The Diocese negotiated a \$31 million settlement. Bridgeport, Connecticut, a confidential settlement worth a reported \$12 million, and then Boston, \$15 million in secret settlements in the past, then a new settlement this month that will cost the church between \$15 and \$30 million. Mitchell Garabedian represents abuse victims in Boston and sees more payouts coming.

MITCHELL GARABEDIAN, VICTIMS' ATTORNEY: I think the church is just seeing the tip of the iceberg at this point in time, so the money damages they're facing have to be horrendous, have to be incredible.

VILES: It is hard to gauge the ultimate financial impact on the church, because the Catholic Church in America is not a monolithic entity. There is no single collection of financial assets. It consists of thousands of local parishes grouped into more than 180 dioceses, which are financially separate and

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MONEYLINE 06:00 PM Eastern Standard Time March 19, 2002 Tuesday independent. Some are rich, others poor, many struggle financially.

DR. DEAN HOGE, THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY: The idea that somebody's going to go bankrupt or that some portion of the church will default is silly. That will not happen, because there is money in different places in the Catholic community, and especially in the pockets of good devout Catholic people who will come to the rescue of any diocese or any religious order or something, which is in trouble.

VILES: In the meantime, there is anger in Boston, a campaign urging Catholics

not to donate to the archdiocese.

MARY JOE BAIN, CATHOLIC PARISHIONER: It seems to me that by withholding those contributions, not to our parishes, not to other charities, simply to the archdiocese, that we can send a message that we believe that what the hierarchy has done is wrong and that it needs to be honest with its parishioners about what it's going to do in the future.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

VILES (on camera): Of course, the ultimate cost to the church can not be measured in dollars. This is a crisis of leadership. One priest here in New York, who is 80 years old, calls this the most severe crisis he has ever seen within the Catholic Church. Lou.

DOBBS: Criminal investigations, where do they stand?

VILES: They are local at this point in several states in the Northeast. As we know, there is no national, federal investigation. It is in Massachusetts, in Maine, but they are local investigations we understand.

DOBBS: And no indication that the Justice Department is going to take this issue on?

VILES: No indication in their eyes that a federal crime has been committed.

DOBBS: OK, thank you very much, Peter Viles. "WOLF BLITZER REPORTS" begins in just a few minutes. Let's go to Wolf now in Washington to find out what is in store. Wolf.

WOLF BLITZER, "WOLF BLITZER REPORTS": Thank you very much, Lou. An ominous warning today from the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, al Qaeda is still very much in business, and George Tenet is also warning of a possible terrorist so-called dirty radiation bomb. We'll have details of his testimony before Congress. How worried should you be? I'll ask terrorism expert Brian Jenkins and former NATO Supreme Allied Commander General Wesley Clark. It's all right here at the top of the hour. Lou.

DOBBS: Looking forward to it, Wolf, thank you. While the heavy rain and flooding continues across the south, the human toll is rising. Seven people have now died as a result of those storms, three from drowning, four from traffic crashed on rain slicked roads.

Swollen rivers have washed away homes and swamped roads in parts of Kentucky

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MONEYLINE 06:00 PM Eastern Standard Time March 19, 2002 Tuesday and certainly Tennessee. The flooding there is now the worst in a quarter century. More than eight inches of rain have fallen since the weekend, and a heavy rainstorm is forecast for both tonight and tomorrow.

Coming up next here, in their own words, our newsmakers will say it in their own words. We'll hear from the President on the economy and we'll find out about his skills as a bean counter, next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

ANNOUNCER: Tomorrow on Lou Dobbs MONEYLINE, this winter has been the warmest ever for the Northeast. It's also been one of the driest. We'll look at the economic impact of the drought tomorrow on Lou Dobbs MONEYLINE.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

DOBBS: An incredible new iceberg roughly the size of Delaware has broken off Antarctica. It is now floating in the waters just off Antarctica. That iceberg broke off from a peninsula of ice and snow that extends from the mainland of Antarctica into the Amundsen Sea.

Scientists have noticed an unusually high number of icebergs being formed in that area recently. This is the 22nd and that has prompted some researchers to draw a connection, of course, to global warming. However, contradictory announcements have supported claims of both warming and cooling trends in

Antarctica.

My comments last night here on what I believe is an unfair Justice Department decision to indict Andersen as a firm created more viewer reaction than I've ever experienced in my career. The outpouring of support for my criticism of the Justice Department decision and Attorney General John Ashcroft is the most approval of any position I've ever taken on any position.

That support was approximately 90 percent, and I hope the Attorney General realizes, as I assure you I do, that the outrage against the Justice Department is based on the most fundamental of American values, fairness and honesty, and I hope like you, that those values prevail.

Now let's take a look at your thoughts. Lon Andersen in Texas wrote in to say: "Your commentary this evening was right on the mark. The balance you would like to see is sadly missing in both our federal government and a large segment of the media."

Ric Smith in Indiana writes to say: "Thank you Lou Dobbs. Your editorial comments were wonderful, a tiny ray of sane and bright light shining into what seems like a deepening morass of chaos, confusion and self-serving inconsistency. We are grateful for your courage and clarity of vision."

Mitch Graff writes: "To see the Justice Department come down on an entire company, due to the very poor and inappropriate decisions of only a handful of employees, is not justice at all."

Dan Carson in Maryland says: "I have been with Andersen with seven years and am very proud to be part of a great firm. It's hard to understand why the
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federal government has taken their action against all of us in the firm. How will this help anyone?"

We always want to hear from you. We don't, of course, always agree but we, even then, like to hear from you. Send us an e-mail at moneyline@cnn.com. Please include your name and your address.

Well, a number of issues tonight, the economy, IRS reform, accountability in the Catholic Church, and even the Massachusetts gubernatorial campaign. Now, in their words.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I'm not a numbers cruncher. I'm not one of these bean counters, but I don't believe the economy is strong enough to say that we've recovered. I worry about the fact there are too many people in our country still looking for work, and if people who want to work can't find work. And if people who want to work can't find work, we got to keep moving on the subject of economic security and economic recovery.

PAUL O'NEILL, TREASURY SECRETARY: There's not a single person in the IRS who can be proud of the fact that they give wrong advice that they're slow to respond. You know, it's not because these are bad people, it's because we've given them an impossible task to do. My heart goes out to those poor people who are doing the best they can with the garbage we've given them to work on.

MARK SERRANO, PRIEST ABUSE VICTIM: What I'm more focused on today is calling into account the church leadership for the egregious way in which they have handled this. Catholics across America are learning the truth about their church. They are saddened and I understand they're saddened, as I share in it, and they need to rise up and they need to recognize what has truly happened in the halls of rectories across America.

JANE SWIFT, ACTING GOVERNOR (R) MASSACHUSETTS: I want to thank the people of Massachusetts for their support and for their good will throughout my entire time over the last 12 years in public office, and this is the hardest part. I

also want to express my greatest appreciation to the numerous supporters, staff, and family who have stood by me. Thank you.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

DOBBS: And that's MONEYLINE for this Tuesday evening. Thanks for being with us. I'm Lou Dobbs. Goodnight from New York City. "WOLF BLITZER REPORTS" begins right now.

BLITZER: Tonight on "WOLF BLITZER REPORTS" the War Room. Osama bin Laden's network down but not out. The CIA sounds a warning.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Al Qaeda may be pursuing a radioactive dispersal device, what some call a dirty bomb.

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LOAD-DATE: July 9, 2003

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CNBC News Transcripts

SHOW: Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC

March 18, 2002 Monday

LENGTH: 746 words

HEADLINE: Palestinian Representative **Hasan Abdel Rahman** on Vice President Dick Cheney's visit to Mideast

ANCHORS: CHRIS MATTHEWS

BODY:

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host:

Israel troops have pulled out of the West Bank town of Bethlehem and a neighboring village. The withdrawal comes on the same day Vice President Dick Cheney arrived in Israel, hoping to provide the final push for a cease-fire between Israel and the Palestinians. On his way to a meeting this afternoon with the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Cheney had this to say.

Vice President DICK CHENEY: We continue to call upon Chairman Arafat to live up to his commitment to renounce once and for all the use of violence as a political weapon and to exert a 100 percent effort to stamp out terrorism.

In that same spirit, I will be talking to Prime Minister Sharon about the steps that Israel can take to alleviate the devastating economic hardship being experienced by innocent Palestinian men, women and children.

MATTHEWS: In a moment, we'll be joined by former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak. But first **Hasan Abdel Rahman** is the chief Palestinian representative in the United States.

Mr. Rahman, let me ask you a couple of questions. Start with this. The vice president of the United States, is he going to meet with Arafat?

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (PLO Representative to the US): Up to this moment, I--I am not sure whether that is going to happen or not. But we hope that it will happen because if Mr. Cheney is working towards the advance of the peace process and he's meeting with one party, I believe it is only useful for him to meet with the other party also.

MATTHEWS: Do you trust Cheney, speaking for the PLA--I mean the--the PA? Do you think Cheney's an honest broker between Israel and its Arab neighbors?

Mr. RAHMAN: You know, Cheney is working on his own. Cheney is part of an administration that has a policy. And this administration, in the past, has not shown evenhandedness. We hope that this has changed. The role of this administration is very, very important. And we believe that the engagement of

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the United States, including Mr. Cheney would be very useful for the achievement to proceed.

MATTHEWS: Let me ask you about the--the future. If Israel continues to pull back from the--from the Palestinian territories that it--it took--it--it invaded, you might say, 18 months ago, will that set up the--set up a cease-fire from the Palestinian side?

Mr. RAHMAN: We said that if Israel complies with the requirements--and that is to withdraw its troops from the Palestinian cities that it occupied in the last two weeks, yes we are ready to engage in a--a cease-fire. And this should be linked to a political pathway to lead us out of this situation we are in, namely reach a political agreement that will end Israel's occupation of the Palestinian people and territory that's lasted over 35 years and really led to this state we...

MATTHEWS: OK.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...are in with the Israelis.

MATTHEWS: Let's talk about the public opinion in the Palestinian areas right now. A survey conducted by Naga University in Nablus found that 87 percent of Palestinians surveyed were in favor of continuing terror attacks, 87.5 percent were in favor of liberating all of Palestine. And 64.5 percent oppose General Zinni's mission--peace-keeping mission.

TEXT:

Palestinian Survey

87% favor continuing the terror attacks

87.5% favor liberating all of Palestine

64.5% oppose Gen. Anthony Zinni's mission

Source: The New York Times

MATTHEWS: Does that breadth of anti-Israeli sentiment of willingness to basically eradicate Israel from the map surprise you?

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, I think this is a reflection of a mood that the Palestinian people are living in, in this moment. They are very angry at the brutality of the Israeli occupation, especially in the last two weeks. Three hundred Palestinians were killed or thousands wounded.

MATTHEWS: Sure.

Mr. RAHMAN: Many arrested. Homes demolished. People are--for the last 18 months are living under a state of siege.

MATTHEWS: So this is an artificially high level of resentment.

Mr. RAHMAN: I believe--because two weeks ago, we had another poll that--in

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which 75 percent support peace with Israel. So I--I--I feel that this is a reflection of the mood...

MATTHEWS: OK. OK.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...in which the Palestinians...

MATTHEWS: Thank you.

Mr. RAHMAN: ...are living today.

MATTHEWS: Thank you, as always, for joining us. Hasan Abdel...

Mr. RAHMAN: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: ...Rahman, who is a representative of the Palestinians.

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MSNBC

SHOW: THE NEWS WITH BRIAN WILLIAMS 20:00

March 13, 2002 Wednesday

TRANSCRIPT: # 031300cb.453

SECTION: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL

LENGTH: 7184 words

HEADLINE: 20,000 Israeli Troops In West Bank and Gaza; Fuel Efficiency Measure
Defeated

BYLINE: Brian Williams; Martin Fletcher; Campbell Brown; Pete Williams; Robert
Hager; Lisa Meyers; David Gregory

GUESTS: Howard Fineman; **Hasan Abdel Rahman**; Alon Pinkas

HIGHLIGHT:

About 20,000 Israeli troops are now in the West Bank and Gaza, as this Middle Eastern democracy and ally of the U.S. pushes forward with its largest military campaign since the invasion of Lebanon. President Bush held his first news conference since October, and he had some strong words about Iraq and the current environment in the Middle East. Gas-guzzling SUVs and light trucks were big winners on Capitol Hill today, where a measure to raise fuel efficiency standards for automobiles was defeated.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE
UPDATED.

BRIAN WILLIAMS, NBC NEWS ANCHOR: The president takes a rare public swing at
Israel's leader. And while the wheels have fallen off the peace process, that
may now change. Mr. Bush's man is en route.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I was stunned. And not happy.
Let me put it another way, I was plenty hot.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WILLIAMS: That was the president on another topic, a colossal blunder by the
federal government. And Mr. Bush says he wants to know why two of the September
11th hijackers had their student visas extended, even though they and several
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thousand others died September 11th.

And military procurement, should that include plastic surgery on a Pentagon
credit card? Tonight, with the U.S. at war, the story of how a waitress at
Hooters got cosmetic surgery, courtesy of U.S. taxpayers.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: What kind of message does this send to the troops in the
field, who are facing great hardships, while their employees back home, their
fellow employees, are living it up?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WILLIAMS: Good evening. The idea was the vice president was going to be the
lead story this week. His trip to the Middle East was meant to drum up support
for the U.S. effort against terrorism, which may in time spill over to Iraq.
Then, a few things happened.

Violence exploded in Israel. In this country, a bureaucrat or a computer or
both, teamed up to thoroughly embarrass the White House by granting student
visas to suicide hijackers who killed themselves and a whole lot of innocent

people on September 11th.

But someone at the INS didn't know that until today, when they received a rocket because the president read about it in the morning paper. So the Bush White House today pulled out its ultimate weapon and produced the president for a late-in-the-day news conference, where he made news on, among other topics, the Middle East, by taking a swing at Ariel Sharon and making it plain he's sick of the violence there. And he is not alone.

So we begin tonight with both angles. From the Middle East, NBC News correspondent, Martin Fletcher. And at the White House, NBC's Campbell Brown. First to Martin Fletcher tonight, on what has to stop before talks can start.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MARTIN FLETCHER, NBC NEWS CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Ramallah, stones don't stop the Israeli army. Nor does a lone gunman. Israel tightened its iron grip of this West Bank town today. One hundred and fifty tanks and armored vehicles patrolling. Loudspeakers warned anyone on the streets would be shot. Israel meant it, killing an Italian journalist who was following Palestinian gunmen. About 20,000 Israeli troops are now in the West Bank and Gaza. And today Israel's Prime Minister Sharon fought back on another front. In a furious political battle, he overruled his own defense minister, who wanted to pull the troops out.

Sharon isn't letting anyone here forget who is in charge. What's happening here? In two days here in Gaza, 24 Palestinians killed, dozens more wounded.

(on camera): The Israeli tanks are on the way into the Jubaliya refugee camp

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again, and everyone is getting out.

(voice-over): Panic, everywhere. The battle zone. While tanks thunder down the main street, two attack helicopters hover. It's just another power play, the day before America's Mideast envoy, Anthony Zinni, starts his third try for a cease-fire.

(on camera): Doesn't General Zinni bring some hope for you?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Hope for what? He is not welcome here in our country, because he is going and he's coming without anything.

FLETCHER (voice-over): But the Palestinians got a break last night. A surprise U.N. Security Council resolution, drafted by America, accepting a Palestinian state for the first time -- something America had always vetoed. Both sides here welcomed the resolution, grudgingly.

ZIAD ABU ZIAD, PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY MINISTER: I believe that this resolution is not enough. We are badly in need for international protection.

FLETCHER: While Israel has its own conditions.

RAANAN GISSEN, ISRAELI GOV'T. SPOKESPERSON: There has to be a cessation of violence, terrorism, incitement, provocation, before that can happen.

FLETCHER: But tonight, a tired Palestinian President Yasser Arafat warned the Palestinians will never stop shooting until the Israeli tanks leave. Martin Fletcher, NBC News, Gaza.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WILLIAMS: In short, it's a mess. President Bush said today of Ariel Sharon and Israel -- quote -- "recent actions aren't helpful." In the careful wording of the diplomatic world, that is some strong language, believe it or not. A sign the White House has had it with what's going on there.

The president's man, as you heard, General Anthony Zinni, is finally departing for the region. The vice president, already there. The U.S. is now officially engaged. The very latest tonight from NBC News White House correspondent Campbell Brown joining us from the north lawn. Campbell, good

evening.

CAMPBELL BROWN, NBC NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Good evening, Brian. Well, the president covered a lot of ground today, dealing with a number of different issues. But on the Middle East in particular, he did seem to be answering critics who have said that he's just not engaged enough. The president saying today that dealing with the violence in the Middle East has become a consuming issue for his administration.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(voice-over): The Bush administration, now the most active it's ever been toward trying to halt the violence in the Middle East. Vice President Cheney, in Egypt today, talked strategy with President Mubarak. The White House envoy to
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the Mideast, General Zinni, leaves tonight for the region, his third try at a cease-fire. While today the president sharply criticizes Israel for its latest offensive.

BUSH: Frankly, it's not helpful what the Israelis have recently done, in order to create conditions for peace. I understand someone trying to defend themselves and to fight terror. But the recent actions aren't helpful.

BROWN: But his harshest words aimed at Saddam Hussein. The president, hinting again, Iraq could be the next target of the war.

BUSH: This is a nation run by a man who is willing to kill his own people by using chemical weapons. And he is a problem. And we're going to deal with him.

BROWN: The president said, though, he will first consult U.S. allies and friends in the region. But already, close U.S. allies, Jordan and Egypt, are warning the U.S. not to attack Iraq, fearing it would be an explosive move in the already unstable region. The president today made it clear he will act alone if necessary, even against terrorists in countries like Somalia and Indonesia, that haven't asked for U.S. help.

BUSH: We will take actions necessary to protect American people. And I'm going to leave it at that.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

BROWN: And that was essentially the president's answer today. Also, Brian, when he was asked if the U.S. is revising its nuclear strategy, given the new threats to possibly target Iran and Iraq, even Syria and Libya, the president said today, all options are on the table -- Brian.

WILLIAMS: Campbell, on Iraq, even though everyone knows if the U.S. is really going to move, it will require months of build-up and will have a lot of advance notice. Did the president seem to be speeding up his indications or his rhetoric, or giving any signals?

BROWN: Well, the language, I think, has gotten tougher, what you heard today, especially. But in terms of the president laying out what that actually means, he hasn't done that. What we've been hearing from the administration -- and again, the language has gotten a little harsher over the last several days -- is Iraq must let the weapons inspectors back in, or else. But he has yet to explain what the "or else" means.

And as you know, Vice President Cheney, his trip to the Middle East was in part to try work that out with countries in the region. That, of course, has been overshadowed by the violence between Israel and the Palestinians. But the president hasn't yet taken that next step, and he didn't today, of laying out for the American people, or saying, yes, we honestly are thinking about military action against Iraq.

BROWN: Campbell Brown, fresh from, literally, a front row seat at the president's press conference late today. Thank you for that report from the

north lawn.

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For more tonight on U.S. diplomatic efforts in the Middle East, as well as some of the other stories making news in Washington tonight, we are joined from Washington by "Newsweek" magazine chief political correspondent Howard Fineman, who is also, of course, an NBC News political analyst.

Howard, we can't stress too much, as we tried to at the top of the broadcast, how much was riding, literally and figuratively, along with the vice president overseas. For security and comfort reasons, he even has the president's plane, Air Force One, for this trip. He has a lot more than that.

HOWARD FINEMAN, "NEWSWEEK": Yes. And I think this press conference today, Brian, was in part to give extra support, besides just the plane, to Vice President Cheney. Vice President Cheney met yesterday with King Abdullah of Jordan, who told him in no uncertain terms, that any expectation the administration might have had of silence, let alone support from the Arab world for going after Saddam Hussein, would depend in part on the United States doing something to quell the violence between Israel and the Palestinians.

And I think it was at that point that the United States, as President Bush himself said today, "engineered" -- that's the word he used -- engineered that U.N. resolution that mimicked the president's own language about a vision for a Palestinian state.

And then the president followed that up with a press conference today in which he underscored our support, the United States' support, for that resolution, our role in declaring that there should be a Palestinian state, the vision of one, and the criticism of Sharon. Nothing happens in this White House by accident. And I think these events were carefully timed to try to give some support to Cheney's mission in the Middle East.

WILLIAMS: Howard, the president said a few days ago we're going to send General Zinni. He's our man. He's going to the region. But days go by, they don't send Zinni. He finally leaves tonight. Why the lapse in time, which some Israelis readily admit they used, as Martin Fletcher pointed out, one last push to bolster their forces and put other forces on the move?

FINEMAN: Exactly. I spoke earlier to Dennis Ross, an experienced Mideast negotiator, who worked in the Reagan administration, Bush 1, as well as for Bill Clinton. He said that that was a mistake; that, for whatever reason, you never want to announce you're sending a peace envoy, and then don't send him or her immediately. Because all the bad guys will use as much time as possible to do as much mayhem and damage as they can. That's what happened in this situation. I think the administration thought that merely announcing that they were sending Zinni would be enough for the Arab leaders that Cheney was going to meet. Obviously that wasn't, given the situation on the ground, in Palestine and Israel.

WILLIAMS: Howard, how much can they yell at Ariel Sharon in Israel?

FINEMAN: Well, that's a good question. As you say, these words are very carefully calibrated. Even the president saying that the actions by the Israeli government were not "helpful" will send shockwaves through Israel, and I'm sure already have.

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The question now will be, what other pressure is the administration willing to apply, especially when the United States is dedicated to fighting a war on terrorism? And as horrible as those pictures, the tanks rolling through Ramallah are, they're in response to what the president has previously called "terrorist

actions," on the part of the Palestinians. So there's a conceptual problem he's going to run into at some point.

WILLIAMS: And, Howard, in about the 15 seconds remaining, I am going to go ahead and assume it really didn't help to have the INS awarding student visas to two men who had already flown planes into the side of the World Trade Center.

FINEMAN: No, and the president can say he's really hot about it this time. But there better not be a next time, or just saying that he's hot about it isn't going to be enough.

WILLIAMS: All right. We'll have more on that story a bit later on. Howard Fineman, as always, thank you very much for being with us tonight.

The Israelis and Palestinians now find themselves, it's obvious, in a critical state. The violence between them is as bad now as it's ever been.

Here's a stat: more than 200 people have been killed in the month of March, alone, and it's all over an area the size of Massachusetts.

Coming up in our next half-hour here tonight, a closer look at what they are really fighting over, including what we recently learned during our visit to the region. Can one land ever be home to two people?

Now to the war effort in Afghanistan. U.S. military officials say the 12-day battle for control of that heavily fought-over valley is over tonight. But the hunt for al Qaeda soldiers there is not. Coalition forces took control of the valley in Afghanistan's eastern mountains today, bringing the largest battle of the five-month-old war to an end. But not before many al Qaeda, Taliban holdouts got away again.

Eight U.S. special forces troops have been killed since the battle started March 2. Some at the Pentagon now readily admit: U.S. forces were at first surprised and overwhelmed at the firepower they flew right into.

As one White House correspondent put it today, "Even by government standards, it's an enormous blunder." The fallout continues in Washington tonight, as we just mentioned, over that colossal mistake by federal immigration officials. The INS extending the student visa of Mohamed Atta and another September 11th hijacker, after the attacks. After they killed thousands of people, including themselves.

It was reported on NBC "NIGHTLY NEWS" last night. The president today says he wasn't told about it by a staff until he read about it in the paper this morning. He says he became plenty hot and was stunned by it. The details tonight, from NBC News justice correspondent, Pete Williams.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

PETE WILLIAMS, NBC NEWS CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): It may be the ultimate case of bureaucratic inertia. Six months after the hijackings, this Florida

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flight training school gets formal notice that student visas were approved for two of the terrorists, including Mohamed Atta, the ringleader. President Bush said today he was stunned.

BUSH: And not happy. Let me put it another way. I was plenty hot.

P. WILLIAMS: The Senate majority leader says he's shocked.

SEN. TOM DASCHLE (D-SD), MAJORITY LEADER: For the life of me, I can't understand how something like that can happen.

P. WILLIAMS: And the attorney general directed the Justice Department's inspector general to review what happened, calling it inexcusable, adding that employees "will be held responsible for any professional incompetence that caused it."

The two hijackers were already in the country legally when they applied for their student visas to take pilot training. And under the law, the flight school

could go ahead and train them before the revised visas were granted.

(on camera): Even critics of the INS say the student visa snafu had nothing to do with letting the hijackers into the country, or even allowing them to take their flight training. But it raises this question: How good is the INS at keeping track of foreign students once they get here?

(voice-over): Many former INS officials say today the current system is virtually unable to do that.

TOM FISCHER, FMR. INS OFFICIAL: It does not have that capability. They do not have the staff, nor do they have the -- what I consider the executive commitment, to find these individuals.

P. WILLIAMS: And many in Congress today say the document failure shows the INS is critically outmoded.

SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY (D), JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: We're talking about a horse and buggy technology over at the INS, at a time of information technology and real-time capability. That has to stop.

P. WILLIAMS: The INS says it will be able to track student visa holders by next year. But this embarrassing slip-up shows how far it has to go. Pete Williams, NBC News, Washington.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

B. WILLIAMS: One Congressman today said the INS is the Mickey Mouse of federal agencies. He quickly added, however, that was an insult to Mickey Mouse. We'll pause here.

There's more to tell you about as we continue this Wednesday night, including outrage over what's being called military credit card scam; Pentagon employees charging enormous personal bills to the government, including cosmetic surgery for a girlfriend.

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(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WILLIAMS: There is a new low tonight in low-speed crash tests, when it comes to just how poorly a minivan can perform. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety says the 2002 Kia Sedona suffered an average of more than \$2,400, when crashed at only 5 miles an hour. One test car, by the way, the airbag went off at 5 miles an hour.

The group says that is the worst performance of any minivan it has ever tested. The Institute also put three different 2002 model year small cars to the same bumper crash test, and says the Subaru Impreza, Mitsubishi Lancer and notably, Volvo S40, all received marginal ratings, with average damage ranging from \$629 to almost \$800. Automakers today said what they always say about these tests. That they don't represent what happens in real accidents.

Gas-guzzling SUVs and light trucks were big winners on Capitol Hill today, but there's concern tonight the environment could be the big loser here. The Senate rejected a tough new proposal to force the auto industry to make the popular vehicles more fuel efficient.

Add to that, gas prices are starting to go up again. We get more tonight, from NBC News correspondent Robert Hager.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

ROBERT HAGER, NBC NEWS CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The proposal was to force automakers to improve fuel efficiency from the present average of 27 miles a gallon to 36, within a dozen years. And end a loophole that now allows SUVs and pickups an even lower average.

But it was all soundly defeated in the Senate -- a victory for Detroit. And for Senator Trent Lott, who ridiculed little gas-saving subcompacts.

SEN. TRENT LOTT (R-MS), MINORITY LEADER: After all, this is still America.

You know, we should be able to make our choices. We shouldn't have the federal government saying you're going to drive the purple people eater here.

HAGER: But mindful of the debate, manufacturers say they'll start making more hybrid cars, part gas and part electric. There are two now: Toyota's Prius and Honda's Insight. But Honda plans a more mainstream sedan next month. And for late next year, Ford, GM and Chrysler plan hybrid SUVs. But, is the public ready?

CSABA CSERE, "CAR AND DRIVER" MAGAZINE: Detroit is going to be very cautious about the hybrid introductions. Because it is a new technology. They have to get up to speed and learn how to manufacture them, and make sure they're reliable. And nobody really knows where the market is on them.

HAGER: Important to all of this: what happens to gas prices? And today it appears they're starting back up.

At this station in San Francisco, regular is suddenly back over \$2 a gallon

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for the first time in nearly year -- extreme. But nationwide, it's jumped 10 to 15 cents in the last week, to an average \$1.22. Blame expanded demand because of the recovering economy, experts say. Plus fears of tensions in the oil-producing Middle East.

But even as gas prices rise, it's not clear that will influence buyers to spend more on hybrid vehicles. And today's Senate vote against forcing improvements in miles per gallon appears to make that a dead issue in Congress for years to come.

Robert Hager, NBC News, Washington.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WILLIAMS: On Wall Street today, stocks fell, in part because Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan said he thinks the nation's economic recovery won't be strong or fast, necessarily. The Dow fell 130 points, to close at 10,501. Nasdaq lost 35 points, to close at 1,862.

Another break. When we come back, what does cosmetic surgery have to do with military spending? It turns out, a lot. New revelations tonight, about what's been charged on some government credit cards.

And later, more tonight on the crisis in the Middle East. A look tonight at both sides of the conflict. What's really at stake?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WILLIAMS: Even coming from the folks who brought you \$600 toilet seats, it was still pretty impressive today to hear the Pentagon racked up \$9 billion in credit card debt, because soldiers and other military personnel were using them to buy things like breast implants and gift certificates. More on this tonight, from NBC News correspondent, Lisa Meyers.

LISA MEYERS, NBC NEWS CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): New revelations today that, money you thought was being used to build America's defense was used instead for a different sort of build-up. A Pentagon employee used his credit card to pay for breast implants for his girlfriend, a waitress at Hooters.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Obviously, you can't help but be outraged.

MEYERS: Military credit cards are supposed to save red tape and money, but are being used for everything from those breast implants to holiday shopping sprees, at a cost of tens of millions of dollars.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Because the lack of accountability, the credit card becomes a license to steal.

MEYERS: Government watchdogs testified today that 18 percent of purchases they examined were fraudulent or improper: money for designer planners and totes, a \$20,000 trip to a Las Vegas casino.

DANIELLE BRIAN, PROJECT ON GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT: Allowing hundreds of thousands of government cardholders to make these purchases is lunacy.

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MEYERS: One example: Fungcharoen, who worked for the Army Corps of Engineers. He racked up almost \$34,000 in improper personal charges on his government card. Most of it, investigators say, romancing this former waitress at Hooters. He even paid \$4,000 for her breast implant with the card. He eventually paid the money back and has retired.

Example 2: A Navy woman spent almost \$12,000 on a holiday shopping spree, mostly gift certificates and electronics, and a \$700 plane ticket for her son. What happened to her? She's been promoted and now works in financial management at the Pentagon.

PETE SEPP, NATL. TAXPAYERS UNION: What kind of message does this send to the troops in the field, who are facing great hardships while their employees back home, their fellow employees, are living it up?

MEYERS (on camera): Who loses? A credit card company has lost \$60 million in bad debt, and investigators estimate the Pentagon has lost tens of millions in tax dollars. The military promises a crackdown, acknowledging the need to cut up and cancel this wide-open fleecing of America. Lisa Meyers, NBC News, the capital.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WILLIAMS: When we come back here tonight, critical state. Special coverage this evening of the deepening crisis in the Middle East. How did things get this way? We'll talk to both sides of the conflict. From our own reporting there, we'll have the very latest on the vice president's trip to the region, right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WILLIAMS: Critical state: the undeclared war in the Middle East. How could a land considered so holy by so many be the scene of so much violence? Tonight: the vice president's mission and our own reporting from the nation that likes to call itself the land of milk and honey.

Good evening once again. And welcome back to the broadcast as we embark on some special reporting here tonight to try to explain the state of play in the Middle East and why things are the way they are.

Vice President Dick Cheney is in the region tonight for a visit that was supposed to be a chance to rally support for action against Iraq, but, like just about everything else there during these days, the trip has been sidetracked by the situation: two sides that cannot stop firing at each other.

Before we look at just why the two sides are really fighting, what they're fighting over, we begin with a report on just what Dick Cheney is trying to do there.

NBC News correspondent David Gregory is traveling with the vice president.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

DAVID GREGORY, NBC WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): His mission to the

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Middle East may have been to talk about war against Iraq, but the vice president's trip has been overshadowed by the conflict already raging here. The violence between Israelis and Palestinians dominates Arab newspapers, which lay the blame squarely on Israel. One example: These photos published in a Jordanian paper purport to show a suspected suicide bomber stripped naked and executed by Israeli soldiers. With Arab leaders pressuring the administration to do more, the vice president needed a strong sign of U.S. involvement, which is

why last night the U.S. reversed years of resistance by sponsoring a resolution calling for Palestinian statehood.

The move, officials say, was intended to bolster not only Cheney's position, but Mideast envoy General Anthony Zinni's efforts when he returns to the region tomorrow.

DICK CHENEY, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: It once again reaffirms a commitment the president made earlier this year that our vision for the Israelis and Palestinians is in two sovereign states able to reside in peace with one another.

GREGORY: Back at the White House today, the president weighed in.

BUSH: The need for us to be involved in the Middle East is to help save lives. And we're going to stay involved in the Middle East and, at the same time, continue to talk about Iraq and Iran and other nations, and continue to wage a war on terror, which is exactly what we're doing.

GREGORY: Arab support for an American-led war against Iraq appears to be conditioned on a reduction of violence between Israelis and Palestinians. And that makes the Zinni mission all the more important. But with the conflict growing deadlier by the day, it appears his goals will be limited.

MARTIN INDYK, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL: To get the violence and the terrorism ended and the parties back to the negotiating table, that would be sufficient.

GREGORY (on camera): U.S. officials have grown increasingly frustrated with Prime Minister Sharon, who has ratcheted up the violence even as Mr. Cheney is in the region. Said one annoyed senior official tonight, "The prime minister did not coordinate his actions with the U.S. government."

David Gregory, NBC News, Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WILLIAMS: Both sides in the always boisterous, sometimes very violent Middle East say you can find Biblical justification for why they own the land they're sitting on and, in some cases, the land that others are sitting on. It is a fight that goes back hundreds of years. When they're firing at each other, people ask, "Will there ever be peace?" When they're at peace, people ask, "Will the peace ever last?"

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Having just returned from the region, tonight we have a look at the confusing images and confusing history of some of the most fought-over land in the world.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(voice-over): This is the Israel fighting to attract tourism, trying to get more Americans and others to come here. The only thing that fights this idyllic image are these images of fighting also airing on television, giving off the unmistakable impression that there's more than one Israel. There's farmland, there's holy land, and the land where violence and hatred are part of life.

CHEMI SHALEV, POLITICAL SCIENTIST: Palestinians don't care when Israelis are blown up. And Israelis don't care when Palestinian children are killed. That's part of the equation of hate, the cycle of violence, and all these cliches that we use.

WILLIAMS (on camera): The fact is, Israel can and does dominate news coverage in the United States. And the terms and regions can run together, from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, Gaza to the West Bank.

There are many different Israels, beginning here in Tel Aviv, a thoroughly modern metropolitan center where a lot of the people who live here readily admit they would never go to a place like Gaza or the West Bank.

(voice-over): For starters, Israel is in the middle of a very dangerous

neighborhood, a nation the size of Massachusetts, surrounded by some vast and potentially menacing neighbors.

To the east, there's Iran and Iraq, two of the three nations branded by the president as the axis of evil; Syria to the north; the Saudis and Egypt to the south and West; and closer in, two groups, Israelis and Palestinians, so far largely unable to peacefully coexist in a very small place.

SHALEV: Many people think that it's a ticking time bomb and that the more that the current situation continues, the more Gaza breeds suicide bombers who, in turn, perpetuate the situation that we're in.

WILLIAMS: Israelis feel vulnerable from the Golan Heights, which looks out over them. They feel their commercial flights are potentially vulnerable while flying in and out over Arab-controlled hillsides. But the real problem is local, the violence caused by so much pent-up anger.

(on camera): He has been shot at by Israeli patrol boats within the 6-mile allowable limits.

(voice-over): A fisherman in the Gaza Strip angry at the paltry catch, which he says is the work of 12 men over two days. Palestinian fishermen are now kept just a few miles from shore, where the fish are small and the Israeli patrol boats are plentiful.

DR. EYAD EL-SARRAJ: Gaza is like a prison without a roof.

WILLIAMS: Dr. Eyad El-Sarraj has done something unique. He has opened a mental health clinic in Gaza, a slim strip of beachfront a few miles wide home

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to one million people living in some of the world's most crushing poverty. His theory is that violence is addictive and can even become genetic.

EL-SARRAJ: And I believe that the impact on the future generation is to -- that they learn the violent behavior. Plus, I believe that there is an impact on their genes.

WILLIAMS: The West Bank is different. It is tense and heavily armed and very violent these days, but it's vast and offers more freedom of movement.

Israel won the West Bank in a war back in 1967. They took it from Jordan.

They took Gaza from Egypt and the Golan Heights from Syria. The problem, of course, now with any peace deal that calls for going back to the 1967 borders: A whole lot of Israelis have moved in since. An estimated 200,000 Israelis are living in settlements like this one. Now, what if the land they are living on gets bargained away and they're suddenly guests of the Palestinians?

The Palestinians in Gaza don't feel anything like guests of the Israelis.

Gaza has been all but locked down for months now since the violence started.

Tanks are a common sight in the streets. So are gun battles.

This father of 11 children used to work in Tel Aviv. Now he is prevented from leaving Gaza to make a living.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE (through translator): I'm trying to find work. I am looking for work, but I can't find it. I hope there will be peace and security for us and for all the people in the world.

WILLIAMS: He may be an unemployed carpenter in a three-room apartment in one of the poorest cities in the world, but he knows past peace deals by their names: Camp David, Oslo. For now, Gaza is the only reality. For him, there's no leaving here.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WILLIAMS: In this land of ancient hatreds and all those peace deals, it's fair to ask where it all goes from here. Is there any way out of the critical state Israelis and Palestinians find themselves in presently?

Ambassador Alon Pinkas served as an adviser to former Israeli Prime Minister

Ehud Barak. He is now Israel's consul general in New York. **Hasan Abdel Rahman** is the head of the Palestinian delegation at the U.S. And he is the highest ranking Palestinian diplomat in this country. Both men agree there can be a Palestinian state, but, as you'll hear when we come right back, they have very different ideas as to how we'll get there from here. (COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WILLIAMS: So far tonight, there have only been three people killed in the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. And it is some indication of just how bad things are right now when that kind of death toll is considered a good day, on the whole, in that region.

So, how do the Israelis and Palestinians get out of this volatile situation?

Joining us tonight: Israel's consul general to New York, Ambassador Alon

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Pinkas -- he is with us from New York -- and in Washington tonight: **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the U.S. and the highest ranking Palestinian diplomat in this country.

Ambassador Pinkas, I would like to begin with you.

Before we talk about a Palestinian state, before we talk about a cease-fire, there's been talk about going back to the 1967 boundaries. And I'm curious, how does a former tank commander like Ariel Sharon do that, when he would be backing up over territory he won during the 1967 war?

ALON PINKAS, ISRAELI CONSUL GENERAL IN NEW YORK: Well, Brian, actually, I was a tank commander. Sharon was a general. So I think he's more qualified to answer that.

Look, the issue of going back to 1967 has been an issue that was a consensus in Israeli society immediately following the Six Day War. What has happened since is that we found no partner to seriously negotiate with. And we don't regard the 1967 borders as defensible borders.

Having said that, last year, or a year and a half ago, at Camp David in July of 2000, under the auspices of then President Bill Clinton, we basically fundamentally said, yes, we are willing to go back to a modified version of the 1967 borders, if, in exchange, the Palestinian entity that will emerge and become a Palestinian state will agree, based on reason, based on pragmatism, and based on realism, that this is the end of the conflict, that this is finality -- that this represents, rather, the finality of all claims.

The Palestinians rejected that offer. And the same line or consistent with their rejections of the partition plan of 1947, everything we've offered since 1967. So, the issue of 1967, the border, the so-called Green Line, is an issue that we're not afraid of and we're seriously not hesitant to discuss or negotiate about.

What we are skeptical about is this Palestinian leadership's ability to seriously negotiate such a deal that would provide us with security. And let me just add one more sentence.

WILLIAMS: Quickly, please. I want to get to (CROSSTALK)

PINKAS: No, absolutely, absolutely.

What we found out in the last seven or eight years of this peace process is that the Palestinians have a talent for political negotiations, but have a serious debilitating inadequacy and deficiency in understanding that a political process needs to have a grain or an element of reconciliation.

They have not come to terms, basically, with the two-state solutions. And I'm sure that my colleague, my friend Abdel Rahman, will now say that, yes, they agree to a two-state solution. But the fact of the matter is, if you check their media, if you check their curriculum, if you check the statements of the

Palestinian leadership, they have not come to terms with Israel as a free,
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independent and sovereign Jewish state. And that is the core of the problem
right now.

WILLIAMS: OK.

Mr. Rahman, you get to respond. And let me perhaps put it more bluntly: that
the view is, though, neither side is a saint in this, the Israeli view, as you
know, is: There's no making a deal with your current management, with the guy
you've got running things right now.

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF U.S. PLO REPRESENTATIVE: Well, first of all, Mr.
Pinkas gave us a lecture that is not a true picture of what was happening,
neither at Camp David, nor before Camp David, nor after Camp David.

WILLIAMS: Is Arafat the guy to make a deal?

RAHMAN: Yes.

But let me, first of all -- and if you allow me, because Mr. Pinkas took
about five minutes to make his presentation, if you can give me equal time to
make mine, too.

The issue here is occupation. Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza, which
constitutes 22 percent of historic Palestine. When I was born in 1944, Israel
was not in existence. So we were able to concede to Israel 78 percent of
historic Palestine in exchange for accepting a Palestinian state on the 22
percent of historic Palestine.

Second, Israel moved Jewish settlers and built Jewish colonies in the heart
of the West Bank and Gaza. Today, you have 4,000 Jews living in Gaza,
controlling 30 percent of the land of Gaza, while 1.2 million Palestinians
control 70 percent. And 4,000 Jewish settlers, who are illegally there, are
controlling 30 percent, including 30 to 40 percent of the waters, the roads,
etcetera, etcetera.

So, here Mr. Pinkas remind me of the little child who kills both his parents
and goes to the judge asking for mercy because he is an orphan. Mr. Pinkas is
wondering why we do not like Israel. Because Israel has used all brutal methods
over the last 35 years, including imprisonment of Palestinians, killing
Palestinians. The whole world is outraged by the brutality of the Israeli army
in the Palestinian territory. Israel is cutting off electricity to Palestinian
towns and villages...

WILLIAMS: Fifteen seconds.

RAHMAN: ... leaving the hospitals without electricity. They are
indiscriminately killing Palestinians, as you have seen, executing Palestinians.
Those are war crimes under international law.

WILLIAMS: All right, Mr. Rahman, I have to step in here, because, in the
interests of time, we have to keep this balanced. And you'll each get another
question and response.

(CROSSTALK)

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WILLIAMS: Now, wait one second.

We may have stumbled across what's part of the problem here. Mr. Pinkas,
another question for you: The United States is about to make a pretty sizable
investment and at least a stab at peace in this region. Do they have the right
to occasionally say to Mr. Sharon: "What you're doing is wrong; we're on our way
over; we would like to talk business"?

PINKAS: Oh, absolutely.

The United States has been saying what it has to say and advising Israeli

governments and making their claim basically ever since Harry S. Truman was president of the United States, certainly since Richard M. Nixon was. And if you look at the Ford administration, the Carter administration, the Reagan administration, the George Bush Sr. administration, surely. And if you look at the eight years of the peace process, they have been identified almost synonymous with the Clinton two-term presidency.

The United States absolutely, unequivocally, comprehensively has a say on the matter. And we are attentive to what the United States is saying.

WILLIAMS: OK.

PINKAS: But if I may just add another sentence, there is a qualitative difference here.

Israel and the United States are both democracies. Israel and the United States share values, share strategic interests, and share a world view in terms of the region and the conceptual framework in which you can extrapolate from the region.

WILLIAMS: All right.

PINKAS: The Palestinians, the Palestinian entity, the Palestinian side, the Palestinian leadership, Mr. Abdel Rahman, who I truly respect, I have to tell you, has not voted once in his lifetime.

WILLIAMS: OK, point made. You said one sentence.

PINKAS: His leader is the man who never lost elections.

(CROSSTALK)

WILLIAMS: Mr. Rahman, the question to you becomes what if, in a peace deal, you get handed 200,000 Israelis who are living on these settlements? What if control shifts and that becomes the circumstance?

And I'll warn you, we have about a minute.

RAHMAN: Let me say the following.

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Mr. Pinkas is absolutely wrong. I voted. We had elections and Yasser Arafat was elected. And we have a legislative council that was elected in a free and open election.

So, Mr. Pinkas, don't come up again with this question of voting or not voting.

PINKAS: Because you don't like it.

RAHMAN: Second, Mr. Pinkas, the white regime of South Africa also used to call itself a democracy. They had elections also. But it was democracy for the white. Israel has a democracy for the Jews. It does not have a democracy for its citizens. There is a discrimination against the Arabs in Israel who are Israeli citizens.

WILLIAMS: We're going to have to...

RAHMAN: Democracies, Mr. Pinkas, do not occupy other people and deprive them of their rights.

WILLIAMS: We're going to have to end on that point, both sides duly warned about the shortage of time.

Gentlemen, thank you both. We'll continue this conversation.

We'll continue this broadcast in just a moment with a look at the Thursday morning papers. (COMMERCIAL BREAK)

WILLIAMS: To the morning papers we go.

Let's begin in Washington, "The Washington Post." You'll recall Reagan National Airport was shut down, just flat shut down, for three weeks following September 11. Then they've gone back to partial service. First it was the shuttles -- now the announcement Reagan National Airport will resume to its original flight service next month, except for private planes, and with this

restriction: For the first 30 minutes of each flight and the last 30 minutes prior to landing, passengers still will not be able to stand at all in the cabin, no exceptions. It's a federal crime.

"L.A. Times": A monkey with an M&M-size brain implant has been able to move a cursor on a computer screen just by thinking about it. And scientists are saying tonight, just think of it: It could have a huge impact on the paralyzed, for example, for moving devices, for moving even prostheses. In effect, some paralyzed patients may be able to get control of long-since uncontrollable parts of their bodies back.

"Los Angeles Times" reporting the lawyer for the wife of former GE Chief Jack Welch, Jane Welch, herself an attorney, says they are negotiating a divorce settlement just days after the editor of "The Harvard Business Review" confirms she began a relationship with Jack Welch while working on an article on him. Jack Welch ran GE for 20 years. He may have a personal net worth equal to or exceeding \$1 billion. A breakup could make Jane Welch among the wealthiest women in the United States, according to one paper this morning. In a statement today, Welch said he expected the split to be amicable.

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That is our broadcast for tonight. We'll look for you tomorrow evening. Good night, everyone.

LOAD-DATE: July 9, 2003

SHOW: INSIGHT 05:00 PM Eastern Standard Time

March 12, 2002 Tuesday

Transcript # 031201cb.k01

SECTION: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL

LENGTH: 3985 words

HEADLINE: Violence in Middle East

GUESTS: Raanan Gissin, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, Martin Indyk

BYLINE: Jonathan Mann, Michael Holmes, Ben Wedeman

HIGHLIGHT:

The fighting in the Middle East between the Israelis and Palestinians continues to escalate.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

JONATHAN MANN, CNN ANCHOR: Rolling through the refugee camps and Ramallah, Israel and the Palestinians escalate the fighting beyond anything seen in years. Hello. Welcome.

Right now, Israel is carrying on its biggest offensive in the West Bank in Gaza since it took the territories in 1967, 20,000 troops with tanks and helicopters carrying out the assault and arresting young men by the hundreds. The Israelis say they're responding to a growing number of terrorist attacks and the failure of the Palestinian authority to prevent them. That kind of language seems to be part of the routine of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but now that routine has been broken. On our program today, a different kind of killing in the Middle East.

First, though, a look at some of the hour's other headlines. Zimbabwe and international observers are judging Zimbabwe's presidential election to be a dismal failure. They say the campaign was plagued by violence and intimidation

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INSIGHT 05:00 PM Eastern Standard Time March 12, 2002 Tuesday

and that thousands of people were robbed of their right to vote. Early returns

show President Robert Mugabe leading challenger Morgan Tsvangirai. A final count is expected Wednesday. Mr. Mugabe's government is dismissing criticism of the election, calling it exemplary. The police commissioner is warning the opposition against making any trouble. Otherwise, in his words, the law will visit them again.

U.S. and Afghan fighters say they are zeroing in on the last pockets of al Qaeda and Taliban resistance in eastern Afghanistan. While U.S. aircraft pounded a ridgeline in the east, Afghan fighters took the lead on the ground. The U.S. rejected a proposal from some Afghan commanders to stop the bombing to allow the fighters to either surrender or leave the region. After 10 days of bombing and intense ground fighting, the U.S. estimates there are fewer than 200 al Qaeda holdouts left near the mountains in Gardez.

An Afghan war detainee held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba is speaking out from inside his detention cell. The detainee shouted a statement into a passing reporter's microphone saying that no one cares about their plight inside the detainment center.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We've been on a hunger strike for 14 days and nobody cares. We need the world to know about us. We are innocents here in this (UNINTELLIGIBLE). We've got no (UNINTELLIGIBLE), nothing. And nobody knew about us and you tell the world about us.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MANN: There are about 300 detainees being held in the camp. Some of them have been on hunger strikes to protest against conditions.

Afghanistan's interim leader, Hamid Karzai, has been visiting Moscow. He's met with foreign minister Igor Ivanov (ph) and President Vladimir Putin. Mr. Karzai says he wants to develop friendly trade and business relations between the two countries. For its part, Russia has pledged to help rebuild Afghanistan's shattered industry and set up a modern military.

In Colombia, a car bomb exploded, killing at least five people and wounding eight. Two government soldiers and three civilians were killed Tuesday when the bomb exploded in the southern city of Puerto Lleras. Military officials say everything points to the attack being carried out by the leftist rebel group known as FARC.

Generally, in our reporting from the Middle East, we try to tell you about the latest incidents and their human toll, Israeli and Palestinian. On a day like this though, the complete list is too long and it doesn't capture how much the situation has changed. Israel began stepping up its operations two weeks ago after a series of deadly attacks on its civilians and military. Since then, Israeli troops have attacked six separate Palestinian towns and refugee camps. They're on the attack once again.

We begin our coverage with CNN's Michael Holmes in Jerusalem -- Michael.

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INSIGHT 05:00 PM Eastern Standard Time March 12, 2002 Tuesday

MICHAEL HOLMES, CNN CORRESPONDENT: Jon, that's right. The violence continues, unabated still tonight. There is violence in Ramallah. There is shooting in Ramallah, and I can tell you that just in the last hour also three Israeli women have been wounded in a drive-by shooting. They were driving by - some form of ambush took place. They are injured, and also a Palestinian man was killed just a short time ago, shot in the head in his car as he drove near the town of Hebron.

This is hurting Ariel Sharon. It's hurting him from both the right and the left. The right says that he is not doing nearly enough and the left says that the war, if you like, the increase military activity is not working. The

violence continues, and people keep dying in Israeli cities. So it's not working.

For the first time this man, who swept the power here in Israel just over a year ago, has found his popularity below 50 percent and that is because he has lost support not just from the right -- from the left, but from the right as well. Essentially what you have here in Israel, John, is a situation where people in the cities are waking up everyday and wondering who will die that day. Suicide bombers are going into areas they did not go into before, and there is a real tension here in Jerusalem, also in Tel Aviv.

The cinemas are empty. The restaurants are empty. I can tell you that restaurants are reporting that take-out orders are up 100, 200 percent. Nobody stays to eat. You're seeing pictures there of a demonstration that was held in Tel Aviv last night, and we went along to that. The signs were very firm - one, I remember, said cut off the head of the snake with a photograph of Yasser Arafat.

Those settlers and right-wing Israelis, who attended this and organized this rally, some 50,000 of them are angry. They say that despite the international criticism of the Israeli military action, they want to see stronger action.

They want to see the Palestinian Authority disbanded. They want to see Yasser Arafat removed - Jonathan.

MANN: Michael, what about the pressures inside the coalition? Ariel Sharon is the prime minister, but he heads a very unruly government. Is everyone in agreement that this escalation, these incursions into Palestinian towns and refugee camps are the right way to go?

HOLMES: Far from it, Jon. The Foreign Minister, Shimon Peres, and other more moderates in, as you say, what is a very unwieldy coalition, have spoken out against it. Shimon Peres was quoted yesterday as saying of Ariel Sharon and the decision to keep up this military offensive, he said, "even a broken clock is correct twice a day", and he was referring there to Ariel Sharon's announcement to negotiate a cease-fire while under fire. Something he said, of course, that he wouldn't do, and also his decision to lift travel restrictions on Yasser Arafat.

There is a feeling among the more moderate members of his Cabinet that what they call these offenses are the wrong way to go, because quite simply the suicide bombers keep coming. The gunmen keep coming, so it's not working and yet he's having to deal with the right wing, several members of which resigned today from the government. It doesn't affect his majority in the Knesset, but

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it was significant that two extreme right-wing members of the coalition quit because they said he's getting too soft, Jon.

MANN: Michael Holmes in Jerusalem. Thanks very much.

Ramallah, depending on how you want to phrase it, is the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority or its de-facto capital. For three months, Yasser Arafat was a prisoner in that city, as Michael just reminded us. Monday, Israel lifted its confinement of Arafat, but Tuesday took control of the city itself. CNN's Ben Wedeman is there.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BEN WEDEMAN, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): Under cover of darkness, Israelis and Palestinians exchange gunfire in Ramallah. Dozens of tanks and armored personnel carriers entered the city surrounding El Amari refugee camp and then large parts of the city, the economic cultural and political capital of the West Bank.

During the fighting journalists also came under fire. CNN cameraman Joe

Durane (ph) and others were filming from a hotel across the street from the refugee camp when an Israeli heavy caliber machine gun opened up on them. It was all a mistake the Israeli Army said. Daybreak and the fighting went on and on and on.

The Palestinian Authority called on camp residents to resist the Israelis, but their light machine guns were no match for Israel's well- equipped forces. We took up positions around the camp while attacked helicopters hovered overhead. Water gushes from a main crushed by Israeli Army. Amidst the fighting no one dares to repair it.

Most Ramallah residents stayed inside and under cover, listening to the battle raging outside. The advance into Ramallah combined with the similar move into the Gaza refugee camp of Jabalya represent the biggest Israeli military operation since the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

(on camera): Just an indication of the situation here, there has been some firing just a moment ago. Also we're hearing that the Palestinian Red Crescent Society has suspended services following an incident in which the Israelis fired upon one of their ambulances that had received clearance from the local Israeli forces.

Now, Jonathan, just to give you an indication, why I'm sitting here in the dark essentially, it's because we are in a building overlooking Ramallah. There has been firing in this area, and we're trying to avoid attracting any sniper fire -- Jonathan.

MANN: And let me ask you about the other people in the city. How much is known about civilian casualties or about the numbers involved in the military operations on both sides?

WEDEMAN: Well you can't really separate military operations from the civilian

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casualties. What we're hearing is that five people have been killed and one Israeli soldier seriously injured just a little while ago in the fighting here.

We don't know how many people have been wounded, and I can tell you because the Palestinian Red Crescent Society has suspended its services, there may very well be people out there who are injured, but cannot get to the hospital. So it is a very difficult situation for everyone here -- Jonathan.

MANN: CNN's Ben Wedeman on a dangerous night in Ramallah. Thank you so much for this.

We need to take a break. When we come back, shifting strategies, new ideas for an old conflict. Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

COL. GAL HIRSH, ISRAELI ARMY: Explosives, laboratories, we found many bombs that were ready, on their way to the main populated areas of Israel.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MANN: Along with hundreds of weapons, Israeli officials say they have captured dozens of what they call "hard core militants" during the sweep of Palestinian camps in recent days. There are no firm figures, but Israeli radio reports saying more than 1,000 men have been rounded up.

Welcome back. Israelis have tried a variety of tactics including a campaign of what they call "targeted killing", but now they're focusing their fire on Palestinian refugee camps. There are 19 such camps in the West Bank and eight in the Gaza Strip. A short time ago we spoke with Israeli government spokesman Raanan Gissin. He says because of mounting Israeli casualties, the government had to try something new.

RAANAN GISSIN, ISRAELI GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN: Forced us to take a real drastic and decisive action, which we call "sustain military operations" to uproot the terrorists from their camps whether they're deployed in refugee camps from the heart of the cities, areas and places where to use President Bush's binocular from last night's speech, to provide them with a notion that there is no sanctuary and no safe haven, and also to the Palestinian Authority, that there's no neutrality. You can't sit idly by and allow these terrorists groups to continuously send those murderers, and attackers into Israeli towns and take the life of innocent men, women and children.

MANN: Now you've covered a lot of ground ...

(CROSSTALK)

MANN: Forgive me for interrupting. But let me ask you first of all about ...

GISSIN: Yes.

MANN: ... this new strategy or this new phase of the campaign. How long does it go on? What's the sign that it has succeeded and how will Israel end it?

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Will there be a withdrawal? Is all of this going to end in a couple of days or longer term than that?

GISSIN: Well success should be measured by, I would say, three parameters. One, the long-term deterrent effect, and that's very important. We can't judge it right now, but I believe there is a deterrent effect by the mere fact that today anyone who's engaged in terrorism, the leaders, the perpetrators, those who follow, know that they have no unity and no sanctuary. In other words, we can reach them every place. If it in the past, it was thought that we will not go into the refugee camps to seek them out. We proved that it is possible without causing a great deal of collateral damage.

Second, the actual dismantlement of the terrorist infrastructure, uncovering and dismantling the factories that produce the Casam (ph) rockets that have been fired into our cities. Finding the assembly lines for the suicide belts, you know, the suicide explosive belt. They're very important. Arresting the leaders of the terrorist groups who are operating against us. All this creates disarray in the camp of the terrorists, forces them to run, forces them to change positions, forces them to think where they're going to sleep the next night.

The third element, and that I think is very important, is that it creates a notion, I think, among the more rational or the more sober leaders of the Palestinian Authority that is really no hope in terrorist activity, and the only hope is to go back to the negotiating table and to pursue the course of a negotiated settlement. I think those are the three major ...

(CROSSTALK)

MANN: Let me ask you about the first one ...

GISSIN: I think ...

MANN: ... about the possibility that instead of deterring future attacks, that Israel has now provoked future attacks, that all of these young men who have been rounded up -- some of them have been taken and arrested. Others have been let go. Some of these young men are going to turn around and angrily respond and in fact, Hamas and other groups are already saying that they are going to respond. What are the chances that this is really going to make things worse?

GISSIN: Well, the question is whether we're dealing with a total anarchy, and then of course you have no other choice, but to respond by defending yourself or with dealing with a society that has a responsible leadership, and we don't elect or select their leaders, but we demand from the Palestinian leadership, whoever it's going to be, whether it's Arafat today or someone else in the

future, that they take full responsibility for action emanating from their territory, and they have to control this phenomena.

Can you imagine that there will be a Palestinian entity? And I believe in the future there will be a Palestinian entity living alongside Israel. But could you imagine that that entity will be a terrorist entity? No country in the world, definitely not the United States, would allow, let's say, Mexico becoming a terrorist entity along its border. So we're willing to give them another opportunity to try and work out a deal where both people could live one
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alongside the other, but without terrorism. Our fight is against terrorism, not against the Palestinian people.

MANN: Raanan Gissin, spokesman for the Israeli government. Thank you so much for talking with us.

GISSIN: Thank you.

MANN: Joining us now with the Palestinian view of these events is **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, chief Palestinian Authority representative in the United States.

You just heard what the Israeli government said. Essentially the word is that the Palestinian people have brought this on themselves because the Palestinian Authority hasn't prevented the suicide attacks, the checkpoint bombings, all of the violence that Israeli civilians have suffered. Is there anything to that?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, CHIEF PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE: Well let me say this. First, the main target of the Israeli brutal military incursion into the Palestinian villages, towns, and refugee camps are the civilians. Israel goes into cities, cut off the electricity, cut off the water, destroy telephone communication, and attack civilians.

Out of the 3,000 Palestinians who have been arrested, there is no military personnel. They are all -- any man over the age of 14 up to 45 has been rounded, blindfolded, tattooed a number on their arm. It is something that reminds us of the Gestapo tactics that were used when there was a military occupation ...

MANN: Well, I'm going to jump in and just correct you on one point, which I think it's clear to make. The Israelis, at least say, and you can tell us otherwise, that the men have been marked, but they haven't been tattooed. We can talk more about that in a moment, but more importantly, the Israelis say that they are finding weapons. They are finding bomb factories.

RAHMAN: Well listen, you know, you have primitive pipes and the Israeli are calling them factories. This is nonsense. I believe that if you follow the Israeli media, you would say - you would see that there is so much criticism for Sharon because he failed and he failed miserably both politically and security. And let me tell you this, if Israel believes that terrorizing the Palestinian people is going to bring more security to Israel, it is the opposite. As you said, this is pushing more people to become more radicalized because the humiliation, the degradation, the denial of Palestinian people's rights to live as a free people in their own homes make people angry and desperate.

(CROSSTALK)

MANN: Let me ask you about something I read today. The Associated Press does this calculation and for the sake of this conversation, let's assume it's true, that in the last year and a half there have been 14 suicide bombers from the Jabalya camp alone.

(CROSSTALK)

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MANN: How would you expect any organization, any state to respond to that ...

RAHMAN: Yes.

MANN: ... kind of violence coming from one place?

RAHMAN: But has Israel asked itself why people become suicide bombers, why people are willing to kill themselves, unfortunately and kill others in the process, why this does not happen before the Intifada? Why it happened today? Doesn't Israel think that it is largely responsible for what is happening? When you take away people's dignity, people's livelihood, over 35 years, fathers, grandfathers and children are being humiliated by military occupation. Doesn't this make Israel and the Israelis and the supporters of Israel think why those people are angry.

(CROSSTALK)

MANN: On that note, I'm afraid we're going to have to interrupt you and bring this conversation to an end. **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, chief Palestinian Authority representative here in the United States. Thank you so much for talking with us.

RAHMAN: Thank you.

MANN: Another break and then a new conversation about Washington's role. Is there anything the United States can do? Stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MANN: Two different American envoys have meetings ahead in the Middle East. Anthony Zinni is to arrive in Israel on Thursday. Vice President Dick Cheney visited Jordan Tuesday on a 10-day visit that will include stops in Israel, Turkey, and nine Arab countries.

Welcome back.

The two men were sent on very different missions, but events may be muddying things. In Jordan there was no appetite for war, not against Iraq and especially not for the war being fought across the border. The vice president had to talk more than he planned to about the Israelis and the Palestinians.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DICK CHENEY, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: The United States will do all it can to help end the tragic violence between the Palestinians and the Israelis and return the parties to a productive negotiating process.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MANN: Joining us now to talk about what Washington can hope to do is the former U.S. Ambassador to Israel, Martin Indyk, now Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution. So there are two men with different responsibilities in the region. Let's start with Anthony Zinni. What realistically does he bring to the problems that are awaiting him?

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MARTIN INDYK, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL: Well he first of all brings presidential and as you heard vice presidential commitment to do all we can to try to stop the violence. Up to now for the last few months President Bush has said we're not sending Zinni back until the violence stops. It was kind of backwards. Now he's coming out with presidential commitments, so that's the first trick in his bag.

The second thing is he's coming with the secretary of state's orders to stay out there this time, to work with the parties to get a meaningful cease-fire. Last time, when the going got tough, he turned around and left. The third trick in his bag is the idea of monitors - setting up a monitoring system so that if he can get the parties to go ahead with the cease-fire and implement the steps in the - in the George Tenet plan that they've already agreed to, we can have a monitoring system on the ground where if one or the other side violates, there's an accountability process and we can get them to take actions to come into line again with the cease-fire.

The question is whether he's got a fourth trick in his bag, which will be, I think, essential, which is some kind of American framework for a political process that will latch up to the cease-fire process and give both sides a sense that there's a real way out of this crisis.

MANN: Do they want a way out? Are both sides looking for an excuse to ratchet back or are we seeing now the beginning of a much more serious and extended kind of violence?

INDYK: Well I think that on the Palestinian side, there are those, Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and certainly in the Tso Zen (ph) militia as well who believe that the violence is working, and they are not going to welcome a process that in effect gets them to stop their activities and sidelines them because they don't have a seat at the political table.

On the Israeli side, I think amongst the people there's a lot of anger, and there's pressure in the right - on the right wing for Prime Minister Sharon to respond to the violence in terrorism with force, but there's also a growing sense of despair and a real desire to see a political process get kicked off. So it really is going to depend on the leadership on the Palestinian and the Israeli side. Is Arafat prepared to confront his hard liners and stop them from conducting this campaign ...

(CROSSTALK)

MANN: Let me interrupt you - I'm getting a signal that we've got just one minute left to talk. Is Dick Cheney's visit derailed?

INDYK: No, but he's going to have to talk about more than just the coming war on Iraq. He's obviously got to reassure the Arab leaders that he talks to that we, the United States, are going to make an effort to calm things down on the Palestinian front at the same time as we ramp up on the Iraqi front.

MANN: On that note, Martin Indyk, of the Brookings Institution. Thank you so much for talking with us.

INDYK: Thank you Jonathan.

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MANN: That's INSIGHT for this day. I'm Jonathan Mann.

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SHOW: America At War

March 12, 2002, Tuesday PM ET

NETWORK: MSNBC Cable Programming

MEDIUM: Cable

LENGTH: 61 words

BODY:

START: 26.44

Middle East. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has announced that he's allowing Yasser Arafat to travel throughout the country.

Interview - **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, PLO Chief Representative, says the way that Yasser Arafat is living is the same way that the Palestinians are living.

Visual - Yasser Arafat. Chris Matthews reporting.

END: 28.38

SEGMENT-ID: 14

PROGRAM-ID: msnbc1400.0312.14

LOAD-DATE: April 16, 2002

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CNBC News Transcripts

SHOW: Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC

March 11, 2002 Monday

LENGTH: 1145 words

HEADLINE: Israeli Consul General Alon Pinkas and Palestinian Liberation Organization spokesman **Hasan Abdel Rahman** discuss Israel's recent concession to allow Yasser Arafat to travel

BODY:

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host (Hoboken, New Jersey):

The latest now from the Mideast where more terrorist attacks, military raids and concessions from Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon have occurred this weekend. Palestinian terrorists killed 14 Israeli civilians over the weekend in attacks on a Jerusalem cafe and in a pedestrian mall in Netanya. And Israel kept up its military assault, raiding refugee camps and destroying Yasser Farat's--Yasser Arafat's own offices in Gaza city.

And that much-celebrated Saudi peace proposal is already being scaled back.

The Arab League has amended the plan to offer, quote, "complete peace," close quote, in exchange for Israeli's withdrawal to it's pre-1967 borders. That's much less precise and much less appealing than, quote, "full normalization of relations," close quote, which had been previously been promised by the Saudi prince. Still, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has also shown signs of softening, lifting Arafat's travel ban, allowing Arafat to move around the West Bank and to Gaza.

I'm joined by Israeli consul general in New York, Ambassador Alon Pinkas, and by **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, who is the PLO's representative in Washington. Let's get to the point now.

Mr. Ambassador, will the Israeli government allow As--Yasser Arafat to go to Beirut for the meeting of the Arab League?

Mr. ALON PINKAS (Israeli Consul General): Oh, at this point I--I--I can't answer that unequivocally clear, but I--I think there's no reason not to.

Although the government decision is to provide him with free travel pass around the territories under his jurisdiction, I can't see a reason why we won't let him go to Beirut, provided that he does something between now and the 26th of March to prove his--his worth and to live by his commitment. But that will not--that should not and will not prevent the Saudis from delivering that much-awaited speech.

MATTHEWS: Mr. Rahman, what is the--what is the Palestinian response from the Palestinian Authority to this--Is--Israeli concession?

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Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN**: First of all, it is not a concession, Chris, because the Israelis have no right to keep Yasser Arafat from traveling. And the plight of Yasser Arafat is like the plight of the 3.2 million Palestinians who tonight are living under military siege of Israel. Israel should not be imposing siege on Yasser Arafat or on the Palestinian people. This is illegal, this is not befitting a democracy or a state of law. It's something that is suitable for Gestapo-like tactics that the Israeli government is carrying today...

MATTHEWS: Well...

Mr. RAHMAN: ...in the Palestinian territories. Remember that in the last 24 hours--I--I heard you talking about the 14 Israelis getting killed, whom we regret and feel sorry for. But you--I didn't hear you talking about the 55 Palestinians that Israel killed over the weekend also, Chris.

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes, and this...

MATTHEWS: Well, we've been--we've been keeping up a pretty good body count on this program, Mr. Rahman. Let me ask you...

Mr. RAHMAN: No, yes. But this is not--no, no, but--but we have to have a fair presentation of the events.

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. RAHMAN: You have the Israeli Army arresting 1,200 civilians, none of them is carrying a gun. They are kept behind barbed wires concentration camps.

MATTHEWS: Right.

Mr. RAHMAN: That is not really the behavior of a democracy. That's the behavior of a state that's occupying other people, and imposing on them its own will and denying them their right to self-determination.

MATTHEWS: Let me ask about--Mr. Rahman, let me ask you about prospects for peace. Several weeks ago there was a rumor floated, or word floated from the Saudi crown prince, Prince Abdullah, that countries like Saudi Arabia would be willing to recognize the existence of Israel in exchange for Israel withdrawal--Israeli withdrawal back to its pre-'67 borders.

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes.

MATTHEWS: Now we're getting word that the--the latest delineation is not the question of recognition of Israel, but simply something called 'complete peace.'

Mr. RAHMAN: I want to know...

MATTHEWS: It seems to me--well let me ask you the question. Are the Arab countries willing to recognize Israel's right to exist if Israel goes back to its '67 borders?

Mr. RAHMAN: In fact, the Arabs went beyond that to say 'full peace.' Full
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peace means normalization. Full peace means relations between--normal relations between neighboring states. What do you have with Canada? Isn't it full peace? What do you have with Mexico? Isn't it full peace? Can you give me a different...

MATTHEWS: We have diplomatic relations with Mexico.

Mr. RAHMAN: Of course, but it's full...

MATTHEWS: Do all the Arab countries intend...

Mr. RAHMAN: ...full...

MATTHEWS: ...to have diplomatic relations with Israel?

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes, yes, yes. I think that's what they meant, too.

But--but--but...

MATTHEWS: OK.

Alon--Mr. Ambassador, let me ask you--we only have a couple of seconds. Mr. Ambassador, are you satisfied that the Saudis and the other Arab countries are--are not pulling back from their offer of recognition?

Mr. PINKAS: No, I'm not satisfied.

But before that, Mr. Abdel Rahman should be very careful and--and very cautious before he uses words like Gestapo and concentration camps.

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, the behavior of Israel is like a Gestapo.

Mr. PINKAS: For--let--let--let me finish. Let me finish. For the la...

Mr. RAHMAN: No, but I...

Mr. PINKAS: For the last...

Mr. RAHMAN: I--I mean what I said.

Mr. PINKAS: I--I--I know you mean what you said.

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes.

Mr. PINKAS: And that what makes it so pathetic.

Mr. RAHMAN: Yes. It is not pathetic.

Mr. PINKAS: Mr. Abdel Rahman...

Mr. RAHMAN: Change your behavior.

Mr. PINKAS: ...for the last 200 years--for the last 200 years, national liberation movements have boasted their poets and their philosophers. The only "national liberation mom--movement," quote/unquote, that thinks of suicide

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bombers as its heroes and role models is the Palestinians. So I suggest...

MATTHEWS: OK.

Mr. RAHMAN: No, we don't. Believe me, we don't.

Mr. PINKAS: I su--oh, oh, I--I...

Mr. RAHMAN: We don't.

Mr. PINKAS: Well, first of all, I don't believe you. Second, you do.

MATTHEWS: OK. Well-said. Thank you, gentlemen, very much.

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, believe me or not, that's not the point.

MATTHEWS: Mr. Ambassador, Alon Pinkas...

Mr. PINKAS: But that's--that's besides the point.

MATTHEWS: ...**Hasan Abdel Rahman**, thank you both for joining us. I wish we could have more time next time.

Up next, Newsweek's Howard Fineman's going to join us on how Washington and the nation have changed in these last six months following the attacks of September 11th. You're watching HARDBALL.

(Announcements)

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CNBC News Transcripts

SHOW: Hardball with Chris Matthews (9:00 PM ET) - CNBC

March 7, 2002 Thursday

LENGTH: 1498 words

HEADLINE: Israeli Consul General Alon Pinkas and PLO spokesman **Hasan Abdel Rahman** discuss Mideast efforts for peace

ANCHORS: CHRIS MATTHEWS

BODY:

President GEORGE W. BUSH: Because of our commitment to peace I'm sending General Tony Zinni back to the region next week to work with Israel and the Palestinians to begin implementing the Tenet Work Plan so that the parties can renew their efforts for a broader peace.

CHRIS MATTHEWS, host:

The big story tonight: President Bush sends General Anthony Zinni to the Middle East in a last-ditch effort to stop the violence. And Sunday Vice President Cheney also leaves for that region. We're joined by Ambassador Alon Pinkas, Israel's consul general in New York. We're also joined by PLO spokesman **Hasan Abdel Rahman**. Let me start with Ambassador Pinkas right up front. What do you make of this decision by the president, very dramatically, to send our guy General Zinni over there and try to bring the two sides together? Will it work?

Mr. ALON PINKAS (Israeli Consul General): Well, we're going to have to wait

and see if it works. I--what--what I can tell you, Chris, is I think it's a good idea. It's a positive idea. It--it--it's good that the president decided to dispatch General Zinni or the sec--the president and the secretary of state. I think that any step on the way to implement the Tenet Plan and the Mitchell Plan is a positive step forward, especially given what's been going on the last two, three weeks in which Mr. Arafat lo--lost the little control that he has reigning in the forces under the so-called Palestinian Authority.

MATTHEWS: Well, there's another interpretation: that Mr. Arafat is calling the shots. But let's talk about the man you work for, ultimately, the prime minister of Israel. Mr. Sharon hasn't called for truce in the Middle East. He's called for more heavy--as he put it--heavy casualties on the other side. He wants to inflict a 'beating,' that's another word he chose, on the Palestinians before there's a peace deal. That's very much against the Tenet Plan. The Tenet Plan is a truce and then talks on the politics. Your prime minister says, 'Kill some more Arabs and then we'll talk.' That's a totally 180 difference from our policy in the United States.

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Mr. PINKAS: Not necessarily. My prime minister is saying something very simple: It is absolutely unacceptable and intolerable that we would engage in some kind of political process, while at the same time a level of terrorism will be kept going and perceived and conceived as some kind of a--a natural phenomenon, immutable law of nature that--that you got to live with terrorism. The--the truth of the matter is we will not live with terrorism. Arafat better get his act together, and we've been saying this for a year and a half. Fifty-seven suicide bombers later we're still saying it. Three hundred dead later, we're still saying it. If this man is serious, he must understand that you cannot at the same time appeal to the world for a political course of action and maintain a level of violence as if this is part of a--a so-called legitimate struggle.

MATTHEWS: OK. Let's give equal time now to **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, who speaks for the PLO.

You've heard the prime minister of Israel, you heard the president of the United States. Arafat is gaining in popularity as this violence continues. Are we to believe he really wants an end to this violence when it seems to be helping him politically?

Mr. **HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN** (Palestine Liberation Organization Spokesman):

Definitely. We have been calling for Mr. Zinni to come and for involvement from the United States at the highest level because we want an end to this violence. In fact, what Secretary Powell was saying yesterday before Congress, that Mr. Sharon's policy is a failure. He has failed politically and militarily and that he is taking the region to the brink of an overall war. Because when you declare war against the Palestinian population and inflict casualties on the Palestinian civilians, because Mr. Pinkas is saying there were 300 people killed in Israel. There were 1,200 Palestinians killed, 435 of them are children, school children. So let's not talk about casualties on the Palestinian side.

There is very, very heavy casualties as a result of Israel's escalation.

MATTHEWS: How do you defend the decision by Al Aqsa, which is loyal to Arafat, your--your man you speak for, to go out and shoot every Israeli soldier they can find at every checkpoint. That's a pretty dramatic statement of warfare.

Mr. RAHMAN: Let me--because what is happening that the Israeli army is con--conducting an indiscriminate war against the Palestinians, against the Palestinian police and against members of el Tanzim, which is Fatah. Remember

that three days ago or two days ago, Israel, by using missiles and rockets, have assassinated over 75 Palestinians so far. In other words, Israel is declaring a war against the Palestinians. The Palestinians have the right to defend themselves. Who are those soldiers in the Palestinian territories? Are they ones who are killing those people?

MATTHEWS: OK. Let me ask you both--and I'm going to start with Alon Pinkas. The ambas---Mr. Ambassador what will end the fighting? What will both sides agree that they have achieved to say, 'This time around, this round is over'? What's going to stop this or is it just going to keep going?

Mr. PINKAS: Look, the blue--the blueprint is out there. The Tenet Plan and the Mitchell Plan have been laid forth, not to mention Camp David, not to

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mention the peace initiatives of the past two and a half years or even seven years if you count Oslo. What it's going to take is a set--is a change in the mind-set, a change--a--a total change of the software in this bankrupt Palestinian leadership to realize that there is absolutely no way they can prevail militarily. It is absolutely no way to construct a state.

Look, what we're talking about is not occupation and it's not about a war and it's not about Israelis making life miserable for Palestinian policemen. We're talking about a total bankrupt political leadership. We're talking about an inadequacies of--of a structure called the Palestinian Authority that failed every test it's been put into.

MATTHEWS: OK. Let's--let me just interject a thought here by our secretary of state, Colin Powell, and he had this to say about Prime Minister Sharon yesterday.

Mr. COLIN POWELL (Secretary of State): Prime Minister Sharon has to take a hard look at his policies to see whether they will--will work. If you declare war against the Palestinians and think that you can solve the problem by seeing how many Palestinians can be killed, I don't know that that leads us anywhere. Right now I'm--I'm not satisfied that both sides have thought through consequences of the policies they're following.

MATTHEWS: What do you make of that, Mr. Rahman? That's pretty even-handed policy--policies to make.

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, I--I agree--I agree with Mr. Powell on this issue because what he is saying is that Mr. Sharon has failed. His policy is a failure and he is endangering the interest of the United States in the region also by escalating this war. But the thing is about Mr. Pinkas that he thinks that if he repeats himself often then people may believe him. The bankruptcy is really in the United--in Israel's policy. He needs to look at what the Israeli journalists and writers and politicians are saying about Mr. Sharon. They are telling him, 'Mr. Sharon, you have failed us. You did not bring security and you did not...'

MATTHEWS: Well--well--well, we just had Ron Dermer on for the Post who said that Sharon wasn't tough enough. So the Israeli right is also being heard. But, Mr. Alon, Mr. Ambassador, last word.

Mr. PINKAS: Look, I have to apologize for being a democracy. I--look, wha--what--what can I say?

Mr. RAHMAN: Ah, we have heard this so often.

Mr. PINKAS: Mr. Rahman doesn't understand the concept.

Mr. RAHMAN: Well, listen...

Mr. PINKAS: The--the--Mr...

Mr. RAHMAN: ...you are not the only democracy in the world, Mr. Pinkas.

Mr. PINKAS: I--I was promised the last word.

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MATTHEWS: Well, he--let him finish, please, Mr. Rahman.

Mr. PINKAS: Mr. Rahman, if--if you need to direct my attention to the Israeli media or to 50 percent of the Israeli population or to the Israeli opposition, that means that you understand what a democracy is. So I suggest that you look inwards and ask yourself where are the 50 percent Palestinians who oppose Arafat, who oppose your irresponsible cause.

Mr. RAHMAN: But that does not make Mr. Sharon right anyway.

MATTHEWS: By the way, Mr. Rahman, I have heard Arabs repeat themselves on this program many times.

Anyway, thank you Ambassador Pinkas.

Thank you, Hasan Abdul Rahman.

Up next, the HARDBALL DEBATE. The UN weapons inspectors are heading towards Iraq, maybe. But will weapons inspections ensure that Saddam Hussein doesn't get weapons of mass destruction? Big question. The debate's coming up. You're watching HARDBALL.

(Announcements)

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HEADLINE: Israeli and Palestinian Attacks Increase; Rumsfeld: Operation Anaconda Should End Soon

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GUESTS: Ron Dermer; Yossef Bodansky; Joseph Biden; Alon Pinkas; **Hasan Abdel Rahman**; Steve Pieczenik; Charles Duelfer; Ralph Peters

HIGHLIGHT:

Israel is escalating its assault on the Palestinians, F-16 war planes blast Palestinian security buildings in Bethlehem. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld predicts today that Operation Anaconda should be wrapped up over the weekend. Chris Matthews discusses the violent predicament in the Middle East with Alon Pinkas and **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

BODY:

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

CHRIS MATTHEWS, HOST, HARDBALL: President Bush steps into the Middle East conflict, sending U.S. envoy back to the region. Can America stop the killing?

U.S. troops push ahead in Afghanistan. Which al Qaeda leaders are in their sights?

And Iraq tries to strike a deal with the U.N. Are they just stalling for time?

I'm Chris Matthews. Let's play HARDBALL.

Here's what's happening tonight. President Bush sends U.S. envoy Anthony Zinni back to the Middle East in a last-ditch effort to bring peace. Operation Anaconda continues amid new speculation concerning the whereabouts
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of Osama bin Laden. Is he in the area?

And Iraqi leaders meet with the U.N. Will Saddam Hussein strike a deal to accept weapons inspectors?

Those headlines, plus the big story tonight, can American intervention stop the bloodshed in the Middle East?

And the HARDBALL debate tonight, negotiating with the U.N. Is Saddam just buying time, or could there be a peaceful way to end the problem with Iraq?

And two former military officers on Operation Anaconda. Is it a success or a waste of American lives?

First, this afternoon President Bush announced U.S. envoy General Anthony Zinni will return to the Middle East in an effort to restart peace talks.

Vice President Cheney leaves for a Middle East trip on Sunday.

NBC News correspondent Martin Fletcher has this report from the front lines.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MARTIN FLETCHER, NBC CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The sound of war, Israel's escalating its assault on the Palestinians. Before dawn in Bethlehem, F-16 war planes blast Palestinian security buildings. The second day of intensive attacks by land, sea, and air.

Later, in running street battles and in other bombing raids, 11 Palestinians were killed, more than 20 wounded, four Israeli dead.

Then Israel opened yet another front. About 80 tanks and more than 1,000 troops overran the Tulkam refugee camp in the northern West Bank. The Israelis took over a United Nations school for a command center, deploying army snipers on rooftops to control the camp's main streets.

But Yasser Arafat, whose home in Gaza was bombed and whose headquarters in Ramallah was attacked for the third straight day, just when he was talking on the phone to the Israeli foreign minister, he remains defiant.

YASSER ARAFAT, LEADER, PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY: They have to understand that nothing will change.

FLETCHER: But Israel's prime minister says he'll keep up the pressure until Arafat calls off the terrorists, however long it takes.

It won't be quick. Three bomb attacks today.

(on camera): Only minutes ago, Israeli police caught a suicide bomber in the heart of Jerusalem on his way to an attack, and Israelis have information that at least another 50 terrorist attacks are being planned right now.

(voice-over): To stop the attacks, right-wing members of Sharon's government warn he must get even tougher.

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BENNY ELON, ISRAELI MINISTER OF TOURISM: Every Palestinian that will be armed is an enemy, and he has to be destroyed. (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

FLETCHER (on camera): Does that mean destroy the Palestinian Authority?

ELON: Absolutely.

FLETCHER (voice-over): Calls are growing for America to step in.

SHIMON SHIFFER, POLITICAL ANALYST: No way out from this situation till the moment that the Americans will come.

FLETCHER: Both sides reacted positively to President Bush's plan to send Anthony Zinni once again to try to stop the violence. This will now be his third try.

Martin Fletcher, NBC News, Jerusalem.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

MATTHEWS: For more on the Middle East, we're joined from Jerusalem by Ron Dermer. He's a political columnist for "The Jerusalem Post."

Mr. Dermer, what do you make of President Bush's decision to send General Zinni back to mediate the dispute?

RON DERMER, POLITICAL COLUMNIST, "THE JERUSALEM POST": Well, I mean, I think we have to put the president's remarks in perspective, and also the secretary of state's remarks from yesterday into perspective.

This is an American president that has stood from day one by Israel's side in its fight against terrorism. He was very clear on September 11 that there are certain principles that he's going to adhere to in America's fight against terrorism, primarily that he's going to make no distinction between terrorists and the regimes that harbor them.

And I think he has applied that to the Palestinian Authority since September 11, and I think he's going to continue to do so. If anything can come of General Zinni's visit, I don't know. I'm not very optimistic that anything will come.

But obviously I guess he will keep trying. But I don't expect him to not adhere -- not to continue to adhere to the principles that he set out for many months.

MATTHEWS: What do you make of Secretary Colin Powell's criticism of Prime Minister Sharon's position? Sharon has called for heavy casualties on the other side before talks get under way, because he doesn't want to reward terrorism. Secretary Powell said it's wrong to declare war on the Palestinians, and today President Bush backed up Secretary Powell by saying they speak in the same voice.

DERMER: Yes, again, but I think we have to go back to the fundamentals of what's going on here. I think that America and Israel clearly have the same values, and they're also clearly engaged in the same struggle. Since September 11, I think both the president and the secretary of state understand that we also have common interests, that to embolden terror -- part of the terror network

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anywhere emboldens the entire network. And to allow a victory of one part of the terror network will, I think, embolden the entire network everywhere.

So I don't -- again, I -- despite the remarks that were made in the last couple of days, I don't expect the fundamentals to change at all. I think still Arafat is persona non grata for the United States, and I think unless he changes his behavior, he's going to continue to be, and he's going to support Israel's prime minister in fighting against terrorism.

MATTHEWS: Do you think secretary, do you think Prime Minister Sharon is happy to hear the United States is getting involved in the peace effort again?

DERMER: Well, I don't know if he's happy to hear or not happy to hear. I think what he expects from the United States, again, is to continue to adhere to those principles. I think he's pretty confident that the onus has to be on Yasser Arafat to fight against terrorism. He hasn't done that yet. President Bush, in I think every public appearance that he has made, has clearly said that Yasser Arafat must continue to do that and must give 100 percent effort. I don't see how Yasser Arafat can give 100 percent effort when his own state-controlled media continues to call for child suicide bombers. They continue to call on Palestinian children to become suicide bombers. So I think...

MATTHEWS: But you, but, but, the prime minister of Israel's calling for heavy casualties on the Palestinian side. That sounds like a road map to a reoccupation of the West Bank by Israel. Is that what Prime Minister Sharon

seeks to do here?

DERMER: Well, I don't want to speak for the prime minister, but I think that what Prime Minister Sharon is trying to do is to defend the lives of its citizens, something that President Bush, I think, also said was important to do today during his press conference.

And I think in order to defend Israel's citizens, he's going to have to take much more serious and much more resolute a military action. If there's any criticism from Sharon coming from the Israeli people, it's that he hasn't taken decisive military action, he hasn't taken that decisive military action. And I think he is at least, at least the feeling in Israel is that he is starting to do that.

MATTHEWS: OK, thank you very much for joining us on HARDBALL, Ron Dermer of "The Jerusalem Post."

More on the Middle East and the big story later on.

In Afghanistan, Operation Anaconda continues, and al Qaeda continues to put up fierce resistance.

NBC Pentagon correspondent Jim Miklaszewski has this report.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JIM MIKLASZEWSKI, NBC CORRESPONDENT: Chris, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld
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predicts today that Operation Anaconda should be wrapped up over the weekend.

But given the fierce resistance on the part of the enemy, some U.S. military commanders aren't so sure.

(voice-over): In this night vision video, American ground troops advance on al Qaeda positions high in the mountains of eastern Afghanistan. And after six days of heavy fighting, it's estimated more than 700 enemy forces have been killed. It's now believed these American ground troops were up against as many as 1,000 al Qaeda and Taliban forces, who were getting reinforcements even during the heat of battle.

DONALD RUMSFELD, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE: It is very hard to know precisely what's taking place by way of going in and out of that supposedly carefully watched area.

MIKLASZEWSKI: From the first day of the current combat, U.S. military commanders underestimated the enemy. In telephone interviews today, the first troops into the fight said they came under heavy fire as soon as they hit the ground.

SGT. MAJ. FRANK GRIPPE, 10th MOUNTAIN DIVISION (on phone): Heavy machine gun fire, light machine gun fire, small arms fire, all from the hills above us.

MIKLASZEWSKI: Sergeant Major Frank Grippe took a mortar round in the leg.

GRIPPE: Yes, I got eight to 10 pieces of shrapnel up inside my thigh that I guess you could say I'll be setting off airport detector, metal detectors, for the rest of my life.

MIKLASZEWSKI: U.S. officials report that intercepts of al Qaeda walkie-talkies indicate the enemy is well led by mid- to upper-level Taliban and al Qaeda commanders. But there's no sign that Osama bin Laden himself is hunkered down inside the combat zone.

And there's one more disappointment. Sources report that new cave-busting thermobaric bomb dropped over the weekend apparently missed its target.

(on camera): It's believed now there may only be a few hundred al Qaeda and Taliban fighters left in the combat zone. But bad weather over the next 24 hours and an enemy which appears determined to fight to the death could delay any U.S. victory -- Chris.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

MATTHEWS: Thank you, Jim Miklaszewski.

One al Qaeda holdout the United States wishes was in Gardez is the big leader himself, Osama bin Laden.

For the latest on bin Laden's whereabouts, we're joined by Yossef Bodansky, author of "Bin Laden: The Man Who Declared War on America."

Yossef, thanks for coming back.

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YOSSEF BODANSKY, AUTHOR, "BIN LADEN": (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

MATTHEWS: What do you think's happening over there? Why are these guys fighting so hard against us? It's almost like those Japanese guys in World War II that hung out, you know, held out to the very last even on islands that had been overrun. Why are they fighting so hard?

BODANSKY: We have two groups there, not a single group fighting us. One is the leftovers of local al Qaeda, Taliban, I mean, Pushtun Islamic forces that cannot come to accept any compromise with the United States. But the most dangerous phenomena that is developing in the Gardez area is that local tribal forces are changing side and are joining the hostile -- the forces...

MATTHEWS: Why do you join...

(CROSSTALK)

BODANSKY: ... hostile to the United States.

MATTHEWS: ... a losing side at this point?

BODANSKY: No, it's not losing side. They see in the government that we are trying to empower in Kabul, the Karzai government, a mortal threat to their way of life.

MATTHEWS: I see.

BODANSKY: And that's what they...

MATTHEWS: Why are they endangered by the government we're setting up?

BODANSKY: Because it is a centralized government, strong government, that has a very strong non-Pushtun element in it. And therefore they are cross -- they are changing sides and they are fighting to preserve their own tribal way of life. And this is what's so dangerous for us.

We have succeeded to alienate the local population, which, until very recently, was very -- was on our side fighting the al Qaeda, the Arabs.

MATTHEWS: How did we get into a situation whereby the United States is taking sides among various ethnic groups in a country that we don't belong in, ultimately? It sounds like "Black Hawk Down" again.

BODANSKY: Well, coming in, we decided that we don't want to have American ground casualties, that we're going to empower local forces one way or another in order to do the ground fighting for us.

MATTHEWS: Right.

BODANSKY: And so we took sides, we empowered some people and eventually we made their traditional enemies our enemies.

MATTHEWS: I understand. What about bin Laden? Do you still believe he's outside the country, or is he possibly inside?

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BODANSKY: Bin Laden, the last that we've learned about -- we've heard from bin Laden was about two weeks ago when he send messages to -- of condolence to Pakistan. Apparently at that time he was still in Iran. Where he is today, he vanished. He has succeeded to really clean up his tracks way beyond what he's done in the past, which makes, of course, a...

MATTHEWS: You don't believe he's in Gardez...

BODANSKY: ... (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

MATTHEWS: ... where we're fighting right now.

BODANSKY: No, no, no, no, no. He's been out of Afghanistan long, long time ago.

MATTHEWS: OK, thank you very much, Yossef Bodansky in New York today. A high-level Iraqi delegation met with the United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan. With the threat of U.S. military action looming, they discussed a possible deal to let weapons inspectors back into Iraq. U.N. officials described the talks as "frank and useful," whatever those terms mean.

More on that in the HARDBALL debate later on.

Meantime, the domestic debate here over Iraq continues. Writing in today's "Wall Street Journal," Senator Joe Lieberman of Connecticut says, quote, "I disagree with some of my own fellow Democrats who complain about what they view as expanding war goals. I am encouraged that President Bush appears to have turned the corner on Iraq and now seems committed to changing the regime in Baghdad. When and how we accomplish that is up to our military and our commander in chief."

We're joined right now by the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware.

Senator Biden, do you conform with that thinking of Senator Lieberman, that it's good that this president, George W. Bush, has increased our war aims to taking down Iraq?

SEN. JOSEPH BIDEN (D-DE), CHAIR, FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE: Well, I do, but it -- but I think the most important piece is how to do this. I met for an hour and a half with the president yesterday, and I'm quite confident they've not made that decision yet. They understand that we still have a long way to go, Chris, a long way to go in Afghanistan.

You and I on the program when I got back from Afghanistan, you asked me about what was going on. I said the Taliban's still there, al Qaeda's still there, we're going to need more forces there, and we have to expand forces there. And I think that's been a little bit of an epiphany for the president, realizing that it's a lot more work to be done before he goes off doing something else.

MATTHEWS: Well, what about this argument by Senator Lieberman in today's paper that he wants to give the president the element of surprise? It sounds to me like he's saying the president doesn't have to Congress, come to Congress,

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the U.S. Senate in particular, for approval.

Do you believe this president needs to get an explicit approval from the United States Senate, especially the Armed Services Committee, before we attack Iraq?

BIDEN: Basically, yes. Now, the only argument he could have is trying to enforce under the U.N. resolution at the end of the Gulf war. He could make an attenuated argument that this is a continuation of the authority given to his father, and that the U.N. resolutions still pertain, and he could move. But that, that, that stretches it.

The bottom line here is, I can't fathom the president making this decision to move without informing, at least in a closed circumstance, closed session, or in meetings with the high-ranking members of both parties, what he's about to do. I don't believe he would do that, notwithstanding what Joe would like to see.

MATTHEWS: OK. Let me ask you about Prime Minister Sharon of Israel. He has said he wants to increase the number of Palestinian casualties before he goes to the peace table. Secretary Powell the other day took issue with that theory, saying the United States should try to bring peace, and we should not take the hard line approach of Sharon.

Where do you stand on U.S. interests?

BIDEN: U.S. interest relates to this being settled as quick as possible. I don't know how increasing Palestinian casualties does that. I understand the emotion, I understand the rage, and I understand the motivation. But I don't understand the sense of that assertion.

And therefore, I think that one of the things we should be doing now, I understand the vice president is going to be heading that way. I think we should be trying like the devil to bring these parties together now, and not have increased on -- deaths on either side.

MATTHEWS: Let's talk about (UNINTELLIGIBLE) a challenge here at home in Washington and other major cities, the dirty bomb. You had a hearing on it yesterday. What is that threat?

BIDEN: The threat's real, Chris, just like there is for a homemade nuclear weapon. You know, Russia's a candy store out there. There are literally thousands and thousands of tons -- or hundreds of tons of plutonium and enriched uranium lying around the Soviet Union.

It only takes a little bit for these boys to get ahold of and put it in a homemade device, which is difficult but capable of being made, to have a one-kiloton blast that would take down those World Trade towers in seconds and not over time and spread radiation in a fireball a good distance.

So we're -- are -- the whole purpose of my hearings and the continuation of them, Chris, is, what should our priorities be? Should we be spending \$30 billion to lock down with the Russians that material? Should we be moving in the direction of having the NRC have more control over radiological devices and,

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and, and, and, and, and, and, and, and those things that could be turned into a dirty bomb?

I think we should. I think it's the number one most important priority the United States faces in this war on terror, the number one.

MATTHEWS: Thank you very much, Senator Joe Biden, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Thanks for joining us on HARDBALL.

Those are the headlines tonight, but the big story coming back, more on Anthony Zinni's mission to the Middle East. What can America do to stop the bloodshed?

And later, the HARDBALL debate, is Saddam Hussein just stalling for time with the U.N., or is there a peaceful way to contain Iraq?

And later, Operation Anaconda, is it a military success or a waste of American lives?

You're watching HARDBALL.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Because of our commitment to peace, I'm sending General Tony Zinni back to the region next week to work with Israel and the Palestinians to begin implementing the Tenant work plan so that the parties can renew their efforts for a broader peace.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: The big story tonight, President Bush sends General Anthony Zinni to the Middle East in a last-ditch effort to stop the violence. And Sunday, Vice President Cheney also leaves for that region.

And we're joined by Ambassador Alon Pinkas, Israel's consul general in New York, and we're also joined by PLO spokesman **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

Let me start with Ambassador Pinkas right up front. What do you make of this decision by the president, very dramatically, to send our guy, General Zinni,

over there and try to bring the two sides together? Will it work?

ALON PINKAS, ISRAELI CONSUL GENERAL: Well, we're going to have to wait and see if it works. What I can tell you, Chris, is, I think it's a good idea, it's a positive idea, it's good that the president decided to dispatch General Zinni or the -- the president and the secretary of state. I think that any step on the way to implement the Tenant plan and the Mitchell plan is a positive step forward, especially given what's been going on in the last two or three weeks, in which Mr. Arafat lost the little control that he has reigning in the forces under the so-called Palestinian Authority.

MATTHEWS: Well, there's another interpretation, that Mr. Arafat is calling the shots. But let's talk about the man you work for, ultimately, the prime
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minister of Israel. Mr. Sharon hasn't called for truce in the Middle East, he's called for more heavy, as he put it, "heavy casualties on the other side." He wants to inflict a "beating," that's another word he chose, on the Palestinians before there's a peace deal.

That's very much against the Tenant plan. The Tenant plan is, a truce, and then talks on the politics. Your prime minister says kill some more Arabs, and then we'll talk. That's a totally 180 difference from our policy in the United States.

PINKAS: Not necessarily. My prime minister is saying something very simple. It is absolutely unacceptable and intolerable that we would engage in some kind of political process while at the same time a level of terrorism will be kept going and perceived and conceived as some kind of a natural phenomena, an immutable law of nature that you got to live with terrorism.

The truth of the matter is, we will not live with terrorism. Arafat better get his act together, and we've been saying this for a year and a half.

Fifty-seven suicide bombers later, we're still saying it. Three hundred dead later, we're still saying it.

If this man is serious, he must understand that you cannot at the same time appeal to the world for a political course of action and maintain a level of violence as if this is part of a so-called legitimate struggle.

MATTHEWS: OK, let's give equal time now to **Hasan Abdel Rahman**, who speaks for the PLO. You've heard the prime minister of Israel, you heard the president of the United States. Arafat is gaining in popularity as this violence continues. Are we to believe he really wants an end to this violence, when it seems to be helping him politically?

HASAN ABDEL RAHMAN, PLO SPOKESMAN: Definitely, we have been calling for Mr. Zinni to come, and for involvement from the United States at the highest level, because we want an end to this violence. In fact, what Secretary Powell was saying yesterday before Congress, that Mr. Sharon's policy is a failure, he has failed politically and militarily, and that he is taking the region to the brink of an overall war.

Because when you declare war against the Palestinian population, and inflict casualties on the Palestinian civilians, because Mr. Pinkas is saying that there were 300 people killed in Israel, there were 1,200 Palestinians killed, 435 of them are children, school children.

So let's not talk about casualties on the Palestinian side, there is very, very heavy casualties as a result of Israel's escalation.

MATTHEWS: How do you defend the decision by Al Achsa (ph) which is loyal to Arafat, your man you speak for, to go out and shoot every Israeli soldier they can find at every checkpoint? That's a pretty dramatic statement of warfare.

RAHMAN: Let me -- because what is happening, that the Israeli army is

conducting an indiscriminate war against the Palestinians, against the Palestinian police, and against members of (UNINTELLIGIBLE), which is Fatah. Remember that three days ago, or two days ago, Israel, by using missiles and

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rockets, have assassinated over 75 Palestinians so far.

In other words, Israel is declaring a war against the Palestinians. The Palestinians have the right to defend themselves. Who are those soldiers in the Palestinian territories, are the ones who are killing those people.

MATTHEWS: OK, let me ask you both, let me start with Alon Pinkas., the ambassador. Mr. Ambassador, what will end the fighting? What will both sides agree that they've achieved to say this time around, this round is over? What's going to stop this? Or is it just going to keep going?

PINKAS: Well, the blueprint is out there, the Tenant plan and the Mitchell plan have been laid forth, not to mention Camp David, not to mention the peace initiatives of the past two and a half years, or even seven years, if you count Oslo.

What it's going to take is a change in the mindset, a change -- a total change of the software in this bankrupt Palestinian leadership to realize that there is absolutely no way they can prevail militarily. It is absolutely no way to construct a state.

Look, what we're talking about is not occupation, and it's not about a war, and it's not about Israelis making life miserable for Palestinian policemen. We're talking about a total bankrupt political leadership. We're talking about inadequacies of a structure called the Palestinian Authority that failed every test it's been put into.

MATTHEWS: OK, let's -- let me just interject a thought here by our secretary of state, Colin Powell. He had this to say about Prime Minister Sharon yesterday.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

COLIN POWELL, SECRETARY OF STATE: Prime Minister Sharon has to take a hard look at his policies to see whether they will work. If you declare war against the Palestinians and think that you can solve the problem by seeing how many Palestinians can be killed, I don't know that that leaves us anywhere. Right now, I'm not satisfied that both sides have thought through the consequences of the policies they're following.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MATTHEWS: What do you make of that, Mr. Rahman?

RAHMAN: Well, I agree...

MATTHEWS: That's pretty even-handed policies, policy to me.

RAHMAN: ... I agree with Mr. Powell on this issue, because what he's saying is that Mr. Sharon has failed, his policy is a failure, and he is endangering the interests of the United States in the region also by escalating this war. But the thing is about Mr. Pinkas that he thinks that if he repeats himself often, then people may believe him. The bankruptcy is really in the United -- in

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Israel's policy. He needs to look at what the Israeli journalists and writers and politicians are saying about Mr. Sharon. They are telling him, Mr. Sharon, you have failed us...

MATTHEWS: (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

RAHMAN: ... you did not bring security...

MATTHEWS: We just had Ron Dermer on...

RAHMAN: ... and you did not...

MATTHEWS: ... from "The Post," who said that Sharon wasn't tough enough, so the Israeli right is also being heard from.

Mr. Alon, Mr. Ambassador, last word.

PINKAS: Look, I have to apologize for being a democracy. I -- look, what can I say?

RAHMAN: We have heard this so often!

PINKAS: Mr. Rahman doesn't understand the concept.

RAHMAN: Listen, you are not the only democracy...

PINKAS: (UNINTELLIGIBLE)...

RAHMAN: ... in the world, Mr. Pinkas...

PINKAS: Mr. Rahman, I was promised the last word.

RAHMAN: ... don't tell me that democracy is...

MATTHEWS: Well, he -- let him finish, please, Mr. Rahman. Go ahead.

PINKAS: Mr. Rahman, if you need to direct my attention to the Israeli media or to 50 percent of the Israeli population or to the Israeli opposition, that means that you understand what a democracy is. So I suggest that you look inwards and ask yourself, Where are the 50 percent Palestinians who oppose Arafat...

RAHMAN: But that does not...

PINKAS: ... who have closed...

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: By the way, Mr. Rahman, I have heard Arabs repeat themselves on this program many times.

Anyway, thank you, Ambassador Pinkas, thank you, **Hasan Abdel Rahman**.

Up next, the HARDBALL debate, the U.N. weapons inspectors are heading towards
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Iraq, maybe. But will weapons inspections ensure that Saddam Hussein doesn't get weapons of mass destruction? Big question. The debate's coming up. You're watching HARDBALL.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MATTHEWS: Welcome back to HARDBALL.

This half hour: two retired military officers on Operation Anaconda. Is it a well planned assault or simply a waste of American lives?

But, first, the "HARDBALL Debate" tonight: In New York today, a high-level Iraqi delegation met with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan. Is Saddam Hussein just buying time or could inspectors be a peaceful way to contain Iraq?

NBC chief foreign affairs correspondent Andrea Mitchell has more.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

ANDREA MITCHELL, NBC CHIEF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The continuing bloodshed in the Middle East a crisis preoccupying the United States, which U.S. officials worry plays right into Saddam Hussein's hands.

He wants to stall any possible U.S. attack. So, today, he sent his new foreign minister to New York, the first high-level meeting in a year to discuss Iraq's weapons. Iraq kicked out U.N. inspectors more than three years ago -- today, no apparent progress on getting them back in.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The U.N. raised the U.N. concerns. And we raised our own concerns.

MITCHELL: U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan said the new foreign minister was flexible. But U.S. officials are very suspicious, even warned Annan to remember that Saddam Hussein is still the boss.

COLIN POWELL, SECRETARY OF STATE: The United States believes that Iraq would be better off with a different regime. And we're examining options.

MITCHELL: Options include a U.S. attack working with Iraqi dissidents. The

stakes, say former weapons inspectors, are enormous.

DAVID ALBRIGHT, FORMER U.N. INSPECTOR: Short of changing the regime and putting in a Democratic government, Iraq will seek nuclear weapons.

MITCHELL: Pentagon hard-liners and their advisers say the U.S. should attack Iraq sooner rather than later.

JAMES WOOLSEY, DEFENSE POLICY BOARD: We are gambling with a lot of people's lives if we slow down our effort to change this regime.

MITCHELL: But U.S. diplomats and the CIA warn the U.S. is not ready for what would happen after a war with Iraq, possibly having to occupy that country for the next decade. And America's military is already stretched thin.

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SEN. JOE BIDEN (D), DELAWARE: We still have to finish an awful lot of business in Afghanistan. I don't think they're close to a decision.

KOFI ANNAN, U.N. SECRETARY GENERAL: I wouldn't want to see a widening conflict in the region. I think we have our hands full with the tragedy that is going there already.

MITCHELL (on camera): Tonight, U.N. officials say the Iraqi body language was good. The question: Are they looking for a face-saving way to let inspectors back in or are they just buying time to avoid being bombed?

Andrea Mitchell, NBC News, New York.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

MATTHEWS: Steve Pieczenik was the deputy assistant secretary of state for four administrations. And Charles Duelfer served as deputy chief of the U.N. weapons inspection team in Iraq.

Let's talk with Mr. Pieczenik.

Mr. Secretary, what do you make of what could have happened in the three years that Saddam Hussein has had free rein without inspectors? What could he have cooked up over there in terms of weapons of mass destruction?

STEVE PIECZENIK, FORMER ASST. SECRETARY OF STATE: Well, he could have cooked up quite a lot of things.

In the nuclear area, he could have been developing fissionable material, which has been on the market. We know 18 different warheads have been stolen from the Soviet arsenal. He's been cooking up various elements on the chemical level. And he's been able to do very strongly. And the key of his own program has always been the biological weapons, particularly sarin, anthrax, botulism and smallpox.

MATTHEWS: Mr. Duelfer, what's your assessment of what he may have accumulated since the last real inspection back in '98?

CHARLES DUELFER, FORMER DEPUTY CHIEF, UNSCOM: It's not what he accumulated. He had it even while we were there. Even when we, very intrusive, very thorough inspectors, were there, he was hiding this stuff. Remember...

MATTHEWS: How do you know that?

DUELFER: How do I know it?

MATTHEWS: Yes.

DUELFER: Because people have told us that. Defectors have left. They have reported that these programs continue. We never found all of the Scud missiles. We never found all the biological weapons.

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These things are vital to this regime. It's preserved him in the war with Iran. And bear in mind, these guys think that reason the United States did not go to Baghdad in 1991 is because they were deterred because they had these weapons.

MATTHEWS: They believe that? They believe they won the war, basically, in a standoff because they had the weapons to destroy us coming in?

DUELFER: They believe the war is not over and they're winning now.

MATTHEWS: Let me ask you about, what good is an inspection regime right now?

Kofi Annan's meeting Tariq Aziz or anybody in New York, and all these conversations are going on. They let the inspectors in, what can be accomplished? If you guys couldn't find some stuff, what makes anybody think somebody else will find anything?

DUELFER: The best that you can hope for is that it will slow down and contain a little bit this program.

But the problem is the regime. It's not the weapons. What the problem is, is the Iraqi people are suffering under a horrendous regime. If the Iraqi people are ever going to achieve their potential, it's going to have to be under a different regime. The risk to the region is big.

MATTHEWS: Why are the Iraqi people suffering from these weapons of mass destruction? What are they doing to the people there?

DUELFER: They're suffering under the regime, which wants to keep these weapons of mass destruction. The people are suffering under the regime. The weapons are what threatens the rest of the region.

MATTHEWS: Why should the United States be bothered with overthrowing a regime the people themselves don't bother overthrowing? Why should we be in the business of picking governments for people?

DUELFER: Because, ultimately, it's going to threaten our interests. It's going to threaten the countries in the region. It's going to threaten the oil supplies. And I think we should be interested in allowing these people what should be the engine of development in the Middle East -- remember, these are Westward-leaning, secular people. Most of these people should be our best allies.

PIECZENIK: I think this is where I would disagree with the gentleman.

MATTHEWS: Go ahead, Mr. Secretary. Go ahead.

PIECZENIK: I think it's very dangerous for us to intervene right now with Saddam Hussein. It's the wrong time, the wrong strategy. And, as Colin Powell said today, we have enough on our plate in Afghanistan. We have an escalating war between Israel and the Palestinians.

And I think it would be very dangerous for us to go in. We have never come

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against 400,000 of the Revolutionary Guards. We have to put it man to man. It has to be ground-troop forces. We're going to destabilize the Middle East. Our allies will disappear. Turkey, in particular, has warned us not to go in.

France, Russia, Jordan, Egypt will not go in the alliance. And there's a very great likelihood we will not win this war and we will be bogged down.

MATTHEWS: OK, let's go to the alternative that's been suggested in this debate. What about sanctions, a regime of going in there with strong inspectors and merely demanding as much opportunity as we can to check for weapons of mass destruction? Would that be an alternative which would meet objectives such as keeping this guy contained?

PIECZENIK: Well, I think that would be helpful.

I think, for the most part, you have to always remember there's a third strategy here. And it's kind of an unusual strategy, but I often used it with hostages. And that is the absence of any attention to Saddam Hussein. Right now, he's not really a threat. Even the secretary -- the director of the CIA, Colin Powell and others have agreed that he is not a major threat to us at this particular point.

So, if you really don't pay any attention whatsoever to him, and you take the media light away, he continues very happily in doing commerce and developing commerce with various elements of our allies. I think that's the most effective weapon we have against him. It's the absence of fear.

MATTHEWS: So you don't believe he's going to attack us? You're almost encouraging benign neglect.

PIECZENIK: You got it.

MATTHEWS: You're saying don't give the guy the spotlight. But outside the spotlight, what are the dangers that he poses with chemical, biological and nuclear? What does he use them for?

PIECZENIK: At this point, almost none, absolutely none, given the fact that, in the past eight to nine years, that he has not been a problem for us at a serious level.

MATTHEWS: OK, Mr. Duelfer, your response to that very critical question? What danger does he threaten? And which of these weapons is he likely to use against who? Biological you say is his favorite weapon. Who is he going to use it against?

DUELFER: He's going to certainly deter people and he can use it as a weapon against the United States through surrogates.

And, bear in mind, if we don't do anything, he will have a nuclear weapon.

That will change everything in the Middle East. Where are we going to deploy our forces? How are we going to protect our friends and allies in there if Saddam Hussein has a nuclear weapon? If we just ignore him, close the door, turn and look the other way, that's not going to stop him.

MATTHEWS: I hate to be too cynical or skeptical too much, but where would he

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drop that nuclear bomb?

DUELFER: He could drop it anywhere that he wanted.

MATTHEWS: Yes, but then what would happen to his country? It would be leveled, wouldn't it?

DUELFER: Well, but are we going to go into Baghdad? Are we going to threaten him? Are we going to ask him to not use his influence against the regime in Saudi Arabia?

MATTHEWS: Wouldn't it be suicidal in the most total way for anybody to use a nuclear weapon in this world today?

DUELFER: But what that suggests is that we should go back to the Cold War, where the United States and Russia were pointing weapons at each other. But we're going to do that with every country in the region as these weapons proliferate? It makes no sense.

PIECZENIK: Well, basically, you have 39 countries right now that have nuclear weapons, including countries that are our allies. You know very well, in the Middle East, that Israel has weapons, nuclear weapons. We know that there are other nuclear weapons in other places in the Middle East. We have not had a nuclear conflagration.

But what you have to remember about Saddam Hussein, he's extremely brilliant at manipulating the political and the social and the media and able to affect whatever he wants to affect. If we go in there and provoke him, he will definitely create a terrorist act in the United States. Without a doubt, I guarantee you, if you...

MATTHEWS: Steve Pieczenik, thanks, Mr. Secretary, for joining us.

PIECZENIK: Thank you.

MATTHEWS: Thank you, Charles Duelfer. Please come back. And I mean that.

Up next: Did U.S. commanders make a mistake by sending in ground troops from

the start to battle al Qaeda in the mountains near Gardez? Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Peters and Major Andy Messing are going to talk about whether we're using our troops the right way. They're coming up next on HARDBALL. (COMMERCIAL BREAK) MATTHEWS: Did American military commanders make the right decision by sending in ground troops to battle al Qaeda fighters in the mountains near Gardez, as they are today?

In today's "Washington Times," a U.S. military officer argues -- quote -- "They didn't learn the right lessons from Tora Bora. If you know where somebody is, why not encircle that group and then bomb them and then let the special forces and CIA use their ability to direct fire? The question is, why did Franks and the military abandon what had been spectacularly successful since day one: bomb them until they're dead or on the run? The only change should be: Put up roadblocks so they don't escape."

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Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Peters is retired from the United States Army and is the author of the book "Fighting for the Future." And Colonel Andy Messing is retired from the Army special forces and is an MSNBC military analyst.

Major Messing, you first. You've got a very strong view here. And I've heard about it today. You don't believe it's smart to put in ground troops at this point.

RETIRED MAJOR ANDY MESSING, NBC MILITARY ANALYST: No, because, by the definition, this is a low-intensity conflict. The philosophical debate is sort of overtaken by events right now about whether it should have been run by the Special Operations Command or CENTCOM, with maybe Special Operations Command leading the way with CENTCOM assets.

But the point is that, in FM 100-25, which is a military manual, about special operations -- which the president said this was a special operations war and that we should have patience -- it talks about how the special operations forces in this kind of a situation should lead with conventional forces in support.

Now, conventional forces have been putting their nose under the tent the entire time. And that's what Bill Gertz writes about. He's talking about the objections of a cascading group of retired officers and others that are talking about how we shouldn't have this conventional intervention. It's shades of 1965.

MATTHEWS: Yes, that's when we went in big in Vietnam, when President Lyndon Johnson decided the United States was going to fight the war and win it, because the South Vietnamese were losing it.

RETIRED LT. COL. RALPH PETERS, U.S. ARMY: Look, that's absolutely nonsense. What Andy just said was silly.

First of all, it's not a philosophical debate. It's a war. And Andy knows very well that one thing you don't do in a war is second-guess the tactical commanders on the ground. You support them.

MATTHEWS: So you don't think there's any political thinking to this thing, saying we've got to show our force; we've got to show the Afghans we can fight man to man? You don't think there's any of that politics involved?

PETERS: No, I think they're doing the best they can.

And let me tell you, that article in "The Washington Times" today, great journalism: They found one disaffected officer, one, who said -- who was unhappy that the Army is getting some headlines, and they should have let the Air Force do it.

Now, look, I have friends in this war in Afghanistan, in Pakistan. And the guys on the ground think that Operation Anaconda is the greatest thing since Motel 6. They are winning.

What does it take, Andy?

(CROSSTALK)

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MESSING: Look, you personally attacked me, so let me do a rejoinder real quick.

Two months ago, everybody was high-fiving themselves about how the Taliban and al Qaeda had their backs broken. And I was telling Chris Matthews -- and he knows it -- that we had to wait until May and April, April and May, to see what was going on. And everybody was high-fiving it.

Right now, to send in conventional forces, here we've got soldiers going in to snowbound areas without snow camouflage. We've got insertions of helicopters, that we're addicted to, going in without helicopter backup support or AC-130s in support.

PETERS: Come on.

MESSING: You know, there's a lot of ad hoc stuff going on. And I'm not a cheerleader for the Pentagon. There's things that -- we don't have a coherent strategy, worldwide strategy no less.

(CROSSTALK)

MESSING: We're doing ad hoc tactical stuff. It doesn't matter that the soldiers are the best, and they're brave, and all this kind of stuff. We have military commanders who are not projecting a good strategy or good tactics. And ask the Russians.

PETERS: Andy simply doesn't know what he's talking about.

MATTHEWS: Talk to him.

(CROSSTALK)

MESSING: That's a cheap shot. You don't know what you're talking about. Have you been to Afghanistan? I have.

PETERS: I've been to Pakistan.

MESSING: Oh, OK. And I've been to Pakistan and Kashmir.

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Let's get down to a clinical question here.

Why does the United States, having fought this war through other people, through surrogates using the Afghan forces on the ground, and using airpower, which we have supremacy in, why did we shift from our strong suit to where we're exposing our troops, just like anybody else over there, and they're just as liable to get killed?

As you say -- as Andy says, they're wearing the wrong uniforms. They're wearing green in the snow, where they're easily picked off. Why aren't we equipped to fight this war?

PETERS: We are equipped. And we're doing very well. It's a well planned

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operation.

And, look, the proof is in the pudding. We've lost what, eight, nine guys?

We've killed, at last count, 700. That doesn't sound like the Little Big Horn.

Why are we sending in ground troops? Because that's what it takes.

Air power is great, but right now, I'm not going to sign up for the divisiveness of Army vs. Air Force. The Army and Air Force are working very well in Afghanistan, while the bed-wetter brigade back here is criticizing it.

(CROSSTALK)

MESSING: You talked about, we haven't had that many casualties. We didn't have that many casualties in 1965 either.

We've got a mentality since Mogadishu, which I was in, Bosnia, which I was

in, and Haiti, where we have to have all this conventional intervention in low-intensity conflicts. We don't have to. We can have a lower profile and be just as effective. Hey, where are our Afghan allies right now?

MATTHEWS: Let's come back and talk about the larger strategic questions about the importance of these battle targets we're getting into. What are we doing fighting in Gardez to start with? You're watching HARDBALL. (COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MATTHEWS: We're back with Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Peters and Major Andy Messing.

Major Messing, let me ask you about this whole strategy of taking on this holdout gang of maybe 400, 500, 600 al Qaeda, Taliban, etcetera, people in the mountains. Why do you think we're making this fight? Because it is costing us men.

MESSING: Well, I couldn't answer for Tommy Franks. I mean, you'd have to ask Tommy Franks that question.

But it's not all about just killing people. You've got to deal with sociopolitical and economic things intertwined with security aspects. And you've got to have a broader plan about how you deal with this, because these people are going to fade in and out of Afghanistan.

There's probably several thousand of them, maybe some of them that we released or the interim government released that have already gone up into Chechnya, gone over to Iran, gone into Pakistan, that will be back into the fight in another five or six months.

MATTHEWS: Colonel, was that one of the dangers of not fighting this fight directly all these months, that we have people wandering? We've got, the latest report, 500 al Qaeda fighters have joined the fray from across the Pakistan border. These people are moving around. They are going out. They're coming back in the country. It's like Davy Crockett fighting at the Alamo. "I'll leave for a while, then I'll come back and fight for a while"

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Is that a sign we haven't had enough ground action?

PETERS: Well, I think the military has done the best it could.

This is a well planned operation. And if they want to send more fighters in there, fine. That's their Alamo. And it is about killing America's enemies.

That's exactly what this is about.

MATTHEWS: So you think it's body count?

PETERS: Body count does matter. It's not popular to say, but it does. You kill the al Qaeda now or they get you tomorrow.

Now, the other stuff, the strategic, the economic, of course it matters. As far as timing this operation or it wasn't perfect, we have learned as we went.

Our military has shown a remarkable ability to learn from October 7 on. They've gotten better and better. And the key thing is, they haven't made the same mistake twice. And, again, the proof is in the pudding. We're winning. We're going to continue to win.

(CROSSTALK)

MATTHEWS: Major, I've got to ask you a last question.

The president said today that we have a very clear strategy over in Afghanistan, as if this has been a plan, a blueprint that's been executed all along the line. Do you sense, watching this, the ground campaign, the use of the Northern Alliance initially, the use of the warlords down south, the final battle we're fighting here in Gardez, do you see a plan there at work?

MESSING: I'll let the colonel answer that one first.

MATTHEWS: Well, what do you think, Colonel?

PETERS: Yes, I think there was a very well thought out plan. And you can lay

it out in detail.

MESSING: No, I don't think so. If that's the case, look at the idea that we're sending in major conventional forces right now. Look at how the Muslim world looks at that. We push aside the little Afghan allies that we had and we go in there. Now, how does that look to one-fifth of the world?

PETERS: It looks like we're strong.

MESSING: No, it doesn't. It looks like we're trying to take over.

MATTHEWS: OK, thank you very much, Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Peters and Major Andy Messing, once again.

And don't forget, you can get all the latest news delivered by e-mail. You can sign up for our free daily briefing, HARDBALL.MSNBC.com.

I'll be right back with what I really think.

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You're watching it, HARDBALL. (COMMERCIAL BREAK)

MATTHEWS: Now let me tell you what I really think.

I like what President Bush did today. He told the bulldozing government of Israel and the pro-terrorist government of the Palestinians that neither is operating in America's interests. Prime Minister Sharon may like the idea of inflicting heavy casualties on the Arab side. Arafat's approval ratings may rise with each Palestinian suicide, but every night the TV pictures from the Mideast add up to the Islamic hatred towards Israel's best friend. That's us.

Coming up next: "THE NEWS WITH BRIAN WILLIAMS." And at 9:00 Eastern, Ashleigh Banfield reports on "A REGION IN CONFLICT." And at 10:00: "ALAN KEYES IS MAKING SENSE."

And join me tomorrow at 7:00 p.m. Eastern for more HARDBALL here on MSNBC.

See you then.

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